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# COMMENTARY

ON THE

# HOLY SCRIPTURES:

CRITICAL, DOCTRINAL, AND HOMILETICAL.

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MINISTERS AND STUDENTS

BY  
JOHN PETER LANGE, D. D.,  
ORDINARY PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF BONN,  
IN CONNECTION WITH A NUMBER OF EMINENT EUROPEAN DIVINES

*TRANSLATED, ENLARGED, AND EDITED*

BY  
PHILIP SCHAFF, D. D.,  
PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY IN THE UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, NEW YORK,  
IN CONNECTION WITH AMERICAN SCHOLARS OF VARIOUS EVANGELICAL DENOMINATIONS.

VOLUME XIV. OF THE OLD TESTAMENT: CONTAINING THE MINOR PROPHETS<sup>1</sup>

NEW YORK:  
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS,

1899



THE



# MINOR PROPHETS.

**EXEGETICALLY, THEOLOGICALLY, AND HOMILETICALLY**

**EXPOUNDED**

BY

PAUL KLEINERT, OTTO SCHMOLLER,  
**GEORGE R. BLISS, TALBOT W. CHAMBERS, CHARLES ELICKTT,**  
**JOHN FORSYTH, J. FREDERICK McCURDY, AND**  
**JOSEPH PACKARD.**

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**PHILIP SCHAFF, D. D.**

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## PREFACE BY THE GENERAL EDITOR

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THE volume on the MINOR PROPHETS is partly in advance of the German original, which has not yet reached the three post-exilian Prophets. The commentaries on the nine earlier Prophets by Professors KLEINERT and SCHMOLLER appeared in separate numbers some time ago<sup>1</sup>; but for Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, Dr. Lange has not, to this date, been able to secure a suitable co-laborer.<sup>2</sup> With his cordial approval I deem it better to complete the volume by original commentaries than indefinitely to postpone the publication. They were prepared by sound and able scholars, in conformity with the plan of the whole work.

The volume accordingly contains the following parts, each one being paged separately:—

1. A GENERAL INTRODUCTION to the PROPHETS, especially the MINOR PROPHETS, by Rev. CHARLES ELLIOTT, D. D., Professor of Biblical Exegesis in Chicago, Illinois. The general introductions of Kleinert and Schmoller are too brief and incomplete for our purpose, and therefore I requested Dr. ELLIOTT to prepare an independent essay on the subject.

2. HOSEA. By Rev. Dr. OTTO SCHMOLLER. Translated from the German and enlarged by JAMES FREDERICK McCURDY, M. A., of Princeton, N. J.

3. JOEL. By OTTO SCHMOLLER. Translated and enlarged by Rev. JOHN FORSYTH, D. D., LL. D., Chaplain and Professor of Ethics and Law in the United States Military Academy, West Point, N. Y.

4. AMOS. By OTTO SCHMOLLER. Translated and enlarged by Rev. TALBOT W CHAMBERS, D. D., Pastor of the Collegiate Reformed Dutch Church, New York.

5. OBADIAH. By Rev. PAUL KLEINERT, Professor of Old Testament Theology in the University of Berlin. Translated and enlarged by Rev. GEORGE R. BLISS, D. D., Professor in the University of Lewisburg, Pennsylvania.

6. JONAH. By Prof. PAUL KLEINERT, of the University of Berlin. Translated and enlarged by Rev. CHARLES ELLIOTT, Professor of Biblical Exegesis in Chicago.<sup>3</sup>

7. MICAH. By Prof. PAUL KLEINERT, of Berlin, and Prof. GEORGE R. BLISS, of Lewisburg.

8. NAHUM. By Prof. PAUL KLEINERT, of Berlin, and Prof. CHARLES ELLIOTT, of Chicago.

9. HABAKKUK. By Professors KLEINERT and ELLIOTT.

<sup>1</sup> *Obadja, Jonah, Micha, Nahum, Habakuk, Zephanyah. Wissenschaftlich und für den Gebrauch der Kirche ausgelegt von PAUL KLEINERT, Pfarrer zu St. Gertraud und a. Professor an der Universität zu Berlin. Bielefeld u. Leipzig, 1868. — Die Propheten Hosea, Joel und Amos. Theologisch-homiletisch bearbeitet von OTTO SCHMOLLER, Licent. der Theologie, Diaconus in Urach. Bielef. und Leipzig, 1872.*

<sup>2</sup> The commentary of Rev. W. PRESSEL on these three Prophets (*Die nachexilischen Propheten*, Gotha, 1870) was originally prepared for Lange's *Bible-work*, but was rejected by Dr. Lange mainly on account of Pressel's views on the genuineness and integrity of Zechariah. It was, however, independently published, and was made use of, like other commentaries, by the authors of the respective sections in this volume.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Elliott desires to render his acknowledgments to the Rev. Reuben Dederick, of Chicago, and the Rev. Jacob Lotke, of Faribault, Minnesota, for valuable assistance in translating some difficult passages in Kleinert's Commentaries on Jonah, Nahum, and Habakkuk.

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10. ZEPHANIAH. By Professors KLEINERT and ELLIOTT.
  11. HAGGAI. By JAMES FREDERICK McCURDY, M. A., Princeton, N. J.
  12. ZECHARIAH By Rev. TALBOT W. CHAMBERS, D. D., New York. (See special preface.)
  13. MALACHI. By Rev. JOSEPH PACKARD, D. D., Professor of Biblical Literature in the Theological Seminary at Alexandria, Virginia.

The contributors to this volume were directed carefully to consult the entire ancient and modern literature on the Minor Prophets and to enrich it with the latest results of German and Anglo-American scholarship.

The remaining parts of the Old Testament are all under way, and will be published as fast as the nature of the work will permit.

PHILIP SCHAFF.

UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, NEW YORK, February, 1874.





THE  
BOOK OF ZEPHANIAH.

EXPOUNDED

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NEW YORK:  
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS,



# ZEPHANIAH.

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## INTRODUCTION.

### 1. Author and Date.

**ZEPHANIAH** (Jehovah hides, *i. e.*, protects; LXX. Vulg.: *Sophonias*) [Jerome derives the name from ΖΕΦΑΝΙΑ and supposes it to mean *speculator Domini*, “watcher of the Lord”—C. E.] gives, in the heading prefixed to his prophecy, of the authenticity of which there is no reason to doubt, fuller notices of his person and time than Nahum and Habakkuk. He traces his descent back through four generations to one Hezekiah.<sup>1</sup> If, from his subjoining this genealogy, we may, with Cyril, draw the conclusion that the prophet was οὐκ ἄργος τὸ κατὰ σάρκα γένος (Hieron.: *gloriosa majorum stirpe ortus*), then it follows still more certainly from the circumstance of his concluding with the name of Hezekiah, that he lays an emphasis upon the fact of his being directly descended from him; and hence a great number of modern exegetes following the lead of Aben Ezra (on Joel i. 1), have rightly considered this ancestor the king of the same name, so that Zephaniah would be descended from royal blood. If Carpzov, Jahn, De Wette object to this, that between Hezekiah and Josiah, under whom Zephaniah prophesied, only two generations (Manasseh, Amon) existed, Keil has justly referred [to meet the objection] to the long reign of Manasseh. The objection of Delitzsch, that if Hezekiah were the king [of that name], it would have been indicated by appending his official title, does not likewise absolutely disprove it. Zechariah, i. 1, mentions his ancestor Iddo (comp. Neh. xii. 4), only by name, not by office; and yet Iddo was a priest, and a distinguished one, as we may conclude from the fact that Ezra, v. 1, (comp. vi. 14), passing over an intermediate member [of the genealogy] designates Zechariah directly as the son of Iddo. Finally, the fables of the Pseudo-Dorotheus and Pseudo-Epiphanius, which assign this prophet, like Nahum and Habakkuk, to the tribe of Simeon, deserve no consideration.

The prophecy, according to the heading, falls in the reign of King Josiah, 641–610. That the few points of contact with Habakkuk (undoubtedly there is but one, i. 6, comp. Hab. ii. 20; for the evening wolves, iii. 3, comp. Hab. i. 8, stand here in an entirely different connection) afford no ground to place Zephaniah in the time of Habakkuk and consequently after the death of Josiah, has already been proved in the Introduction (2) to Habakkuk. They fall under the same point of view as the far more frequent points of contact with Ezekiel, Zechariah, and Malachi, which are noted in the exegetical interpretation. On the other hand it is evident from ii. 13, that the destruction of Nineveh is to the prophet still in the future; and the descriptions of the condition of the times correspond in many ways to the parallel ones of the first period of Jeremiah, who began (Jer. i. 2) to prophesy in the thirteenth year of Josiah. By both documents is the statement of the heading confirmed.

On the other hand, it is doubtful, in what period of the reign of Josiah, which continued thirty-one years, this prophecy, which by its internal coherence (see below 3) is proved to be a unit, is to be placed. Josiah began to reign when he was eight years of age; and when the kingdom was in a very ruinous condition by the evil influence of Manasseh and Amon. As early as his sixteenth year, the heart of this youth turned to the Lord (2 Chron. xxxiv. 3); and as soon as he had grown to energetic manhood, this pious man commenced a decided activity for the religious and moral elevation of the popular life. By this reform

<sup>1</sup> [The A. V. has Hiskiah; but Hiskiah and Hezekiah have the same form in the original. There is no reason, therefore, for a different orthography.—C. E.]

his reign is divided into two, more strictly considered, into three great periods of a distinct character. Namely, the narrative of the Book of Kings, according to which the reformatory activity is concentrated into the eighteenth year of the king's reign (2 Kings xxiii. 1 ff. 21 ff.), receives a more minute statement by the more detailed account in Chronicles, according to which the first measures of the king against idolatry began as soon as the twelfth year of his reign (2 Chron. xxxiv. 3 ff.), whilst the positively final reforms, with reference to it, of which the Book of Kings gives an account, are crowded into the eighteenth, viz.: the appointment of the Temple repairs (2 Chron. xxxiv. 8 ff.) and the events which followed the discovery of the law on this occasion (2 Chron. xxxiv. 15 ff.; comp. 2 Kings xxii. 8 ff.); the consultation of the prophetess Huldah (2 Chron. xxxiv. 20 ff.), the convocation of the people (29 ff.), and the feast of the Passover (2 Chron. xxxv. 1 ff.).

Accordingly we have one period before the reform (1–11 year of [Josiah's] reign); one after the reform (19–31); and the reformation period itself (12–18) between them. To place the prophecy, as H. Ewald and Hävernick do, in the first period, is clearly impracticable. For when the prophet (i. 4) speaks of a remnant of Baal, it supposes, that a large part of Baal-worship, which was still dominant during the reign of Amon and until the twelfth year of Josiah (2 Chron. xxxiii. 22; xxxiv. 4), had already been overthrown. The prophecy of Zephaniah will, therefore, like the calling of Jeremiah, certainly fall after the twelfth year of Josiah. Consequently, the majority of interpreters, especially V. Cölln, Hitzig, Strauss, assign the prophecy to the reform-period itself. However, various considerations are against this. Certainly little importance is to be attached to the consideration that "the king's sons" (i. 8), of whom, in the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign, Jehoiakim was only twelve years of age, Jehoahaz ten, and Zedekiah not yet born (comp. Delitzsch in *Herzog, Real-Enc.*, xviii. p. 500), could not yet have exhibited in this period, the impious character denounced by the prophet; not for the reason that characters are earlier developed in the East, as Delitzsch remarks,—for the age of twelve and ten is still too young to furnish a ground for this interpretation,—but because the expression, "king's sons," is a comprehensive one, and may designate generally princes of the royal blood (2 Kings xi. 2; comp. ver. 1; 2 Chron. xxii. 11).

Another weightier reason seems to be against it [placing the prophecy in the reform-period — C. E.]. The law, certainly Deuteronomy, is very frequently quoted in this book, (comp. in the Com. i. 13, 15, 17; ii. 2, 5, 7, 11; iii. 5, 19, 20), and so quoted as to show that the prophet needs only to put [the people] in mind of it, as something supposed to be known. (Compare particularly iii. 20.) This could not take place at a time when the book of the law was as good as forgotten; consequently not at the time which preceded the discovery of the book of the law; but it finds its explanation only in the powerful impression, which the reading of the recovered law must have had upon prophets and people (2 Kings xxiii. 1 ff.). For the law seems to have come already again into public use, and it is violated by the priests (iii. 4). Moreover, the entire book nowhere takes into view a promotion of the royal reform (which, however, might be expected, if it had been contemporaneous with it), but it represents the condition of the people as a final one (comp. 2 below), which is irrecoverably doomed to judgment; and by this as well as by isolated references [*Wendungen, turns*] (comp. i. 18), the prophet presupposes the prophecy of the prophetess Huldah (1 Kings xxii. 16 ff., 19 ff.). We will consequently have to come down to the third period of the reign of Josiah. That there was even in this period a remnant of Baal, we may conclude from 2 Kings xxiii. 34, where it is said that even after the eighteenth year of his reign, the king had still to strive for the extirpation of idolatry. Comp. Ez. viii. 12.

Luther: I pay little regard to the question raised by Hieronymus, when not only in this place, but also in others, he maintains in a verbose way, that all, who are mentioned here as ancestors of the prophet, must have been prophets. And the Hebrews in such matters, have fancied much, for they are very careful in unnecessary things. I grant that they may have been of the family of the prophets.

[Keil (*Introd. to the O. T.*, vol. i. p. 415), says: "It seems plain, from the notice of the existing public worship of Jehovah (iii. 4, 5), at the same time that he rebukes the remnant of Baal-worship and other idolatry (i. 4, 5), as well as from his still awaiting the destruction of Nineveh (ii. 13), that he labored after the reformation of worship had commenced, but before it was completed, — that is, between the twelfth and the eighteenth years of Josiah's reign; and that he supported the pious king in this work by his exhortations." This corresponds to the second period of Kleinert. — C. E.]

[The prophecy of Zephaniah dates, according to chap. i. 1, at the time during the reign of Josiah, when the power of the Chaldeans began to assume a menacing attitude.

I. It falls in the earlier period, *i. e.*, in the beginning of the reign of Josiah, before he commenced the abolition of idolatry, consequently, between 641–630, b. c., (a) because he [Zephaniah] declaims against idolatry (ch. i. 4–6), but Josiah first undertook the reform of the worship in the twelfth year of his reign (Jahn), and (b) the destruction of Nineveh is still expected. De Wette, Ewald, Häver, and others.

II. During the restoration of the pure worship, consequently between 630–624 b. c., or between the twelfth and eighteenth years of Josiah's reign.

(a) The reform of worship, which (according to 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3–8) began in the twelfth year of his reign, could not have been already finished, for — (a) according to chap. i. 4, compared with chap. iii. 1, the *idolatrous* (בָּשָׂר כְּבָשׂ) existed along with the legitimate priests; and (b), according to chap. i. 4, 5 (בָּשָׂר כְּבָשׂ), Baal and the Host of Heaven were still publicly worshipped (comp. 2 Kings xxiii. 4, 5), (comp. iii.); the expression, “remnant,” shows that the reform had already begun (I.). (b) The fall of Assyria and the destruction of Nineveh, which took place in the year 625 b. c. (?), are predicted as still impending. Witsius, V. Coelln, Knobel, Hitzig, E. Meier, Strauss.

III. After the renewal of the covenant with God, which was joined with the renewal of the Passover (2 Chron. xxxiv. 8–xxxv. 22), consequently between 624–609, because Zeph., chap. i. 8, speaks of the king's sons, who, during the periods I. and II., were still in their minority, and because the law, found in 624 b. c., is taken for granted as known. Bertheau, Klein.

O. R. Hertwig's *Tabellen*. C. E.]

## 2. Character of the Time.

If we compare the delineations given by Zephaniah of his contemporaries with those of Jeremiah, who lived at the same time, the character of the period presents itself as bad enough. The phenomenon, which we observe in Micah, that sins attained to so high a pitch just under the reign of the pious Hezekiah, is repeated here in the reign of the pious Josiah. To understand this phenomenon we must call to our aid the consideration, that wherever the light rises clear, the darkness in comparison with it appears the deeper as it rolls away. [The greater the orb of light, the greater the circle of surrounding darkness. — C. E.] During the very time of the kings who promoted the reformation, the prophets had a two-fold motive to accuse, before God and man, the ungodly of their incorrigible opposition.

The king to be sure is not a despiser of God, but his nearest relations are; and the abandonment of the national religion and morals has its central place (i. 8) in the sphere of the men of rank. The law exists, but since the ruling classes are corrupt (iii. 3 f., compare Jer. ii. 8), it is the same as if it did not exist: it exists for abuse and oppression (iii. 4, compare Jer. viii. 8 f.). The service of Jehovah is publicly reestablished: his worship is officially purified; but the Baals, and Molochs, and the host of heaven sit enthroned in their hearts, by the side of the lip-service of Jehovah (i. 4 f., compare Jer. vi. 20; vii. 17 f.). And the idolaters are far from concealing their idolatry: they have still their priests and idol-worship (i. 7 f.), and swear at the same time to Jehovah and the idol (i. 5, compare Jer. v. 2, 7; vii. 9). The service of Baal is a remnant, but a powerful remnant, which is rooted in the national character and does not yield to the good; while the pure service of Jehovah having become cryptopaganism has lost the quickening power of sanctification. The prophets prophesy, but not God's word; they utter their own fine-spun deceits (iii. 4, compare Jer. v. 13). And in the great mass of the people the religious feeling, which Micah could still recognize, is extinct. Even among those, who do not make themselves directly guilty of idolatry, many are actuated not by fidelity to God, but by perfect indifference (i. 12, 13). A perishing race and dead in a living body, they sit upon their money-bags, and regard Jehovah with unconcern (i. 12, 11). If Micah's contemporaries yet at least still asked: Wherewith can I reconcile God? (Micah vi.); they say: Jehovah does no good and no evil (i. 12). They are a shameless people (ii. 1; iii. 5; compare Jer. iii. 3; vi. 16 ff.): the city is rebellious, polluted, oppressive (iii. 1; compare Jer. iv. 17; ii. 22; vi. 6). Everything that God has done for it and is still doing is thrown into the sieve; exhortations are fruitless, so also are the exhibitions of power (iii. 17, compare Jer. ii. 30; v. 3; vi. 9, 19). They receive no

discipline willingly ; and it is evident that even the final efforts of the king and of the **witnesses** of God have no effectual result. So the punishment cannot fail to come.

### 3. Summary of Contents.

On looking over this prophecy we discover at once, as its chief objects, both the fundamental problems of all prophetic announcement, viz., the great day of judgment, to the description of which the first chapter is devoted, and the salvation connected with it, the announcement of which forms the subject of the third chapter from the eighth verse onward. Thus the external structure of the whole book is easily surveyed. It is divided into six parts, of which each one separately has a very evident connection :—

I. *The Exordium*, i. 1–6. Announcement of the judgment of the world, and the **reason** of the judgment upon Israel, arising from the evil condition of the present.

II. *The description of the judgment*, i. 7–18.

- (a) In reference to its objects, 7–13.
- (b) In reference to its dreadfulness, 14–18.

III. *An exhortation to seek God*, ii. 1–3.

IV. An announcement of the judgment upon the *heathen nations*, ii. 4–15.

V. *A repeated description* of the remediless misery in Jerusalem, iii. 1–7.

VI. *The promise of salvation*, iii. 8–20.

- (a) The salvation of the heathen following the judgment, 8–10.

- (b) The purification of Israel, 11–13.

- (c) The salvation of Israel, 14–20.

It is now a question whether these parts, connected in themselves, but in relation to each other very much disunited, stand related to one another by an internal connection. Exegetes place as the foundation of the collective view the division into chapters, and thus obtain three great divisions, without, however, establishing thereby a connection of the whole : the incoherence of the parts continues to exist in the separate chapters. Compare *e. g.*, the summary of contents which Delitzsch gives on the ground of the division into chapters, at the place cited, p. 494. Strauss combines chapters ii. and iii.; Keil divides the book into three sections : i. ; ii. 7–iii. 6; iii. 8–20; Hitzig, i., ii., iii. 1–13, 14–20. However these are only imperfect remedies and partly not even conformable to the purpose. Unless we are willing to consider the prophecy a collection of fragments, to which, however, the immediate impression as well as the beautiful coherence of the beginning and the end is opposed, the attempt to seek for an internal thread of connection for all the parts is required, and we will thereby have to put the division into chapters out of the question.

In the first place it is evident, that the brief exhortation to seek God while there is still time, (ii. 1 ff.), is naturally and self-evidently connected as a hortatory conclusion to the threatening of judgment (chap. i.), and that we must consequently limit the extent of the *first* great division to i. 1–ii. 3, to the announcement, reason, description of the judgment and exhortation.

Now how is chapter ii. 4 ff. related to it ? It refers to a series of devastations of foreign lands : Philistia, Moab, and Ammon are to be laid waste ; after that the remnant of the children of Israel are to enter into their possessions. Destruction is also to come upon Cush and Nineveh. And certainly the prophet, in this description, does not follow the march of a definite historical catastrophe like Amos, who perhaps has before his eyes the military expeditions of the Assyrians, and Jeremiah, who has before him those of Nebuchadnezzar (chap. xxv.) ; but the heathen nations are grouped together according to the order of the cardinal points of the heavens, west and east, south and north. The first pair (Philistia, Moab = Ammon), represent the neighboring nations ; the second pair (Cush, Nineveh), represent the distant powers of the world ; they stand representatively for heathen nations generally (comp. on ii. 4 ff.), for it is also expressly declared to these representative nations (v. 11), that the prophecy is intended to be really universal in its character.

Now this announcement of judgment seems mainly to be a simple continuation of the description of the day of judgment in chap. i. But the execution of these judgments upon the heathen (iii. 6. 7), is urged as a reason that Jerusalem should have changed for the better ; but she continues to sin still far worse. And if the remnant of Israel is to enter (ii. 7, 11) upon the possession of the desolated lands of the heathen, who had been destroyed (ii. 4 ff.), it is plain, that a catastrophe, which is no other than the judgment upon Israel, must be

placed between the restoration of this remnant and that state of impenitence, which continues in Jerusalem after the desolation of these lands (iii. 6, 7). Accordingly ii. 4 ff. cannot be the amplification of the judgment upon Israel; but it, together with iii. 1 ff., presupposes it.

Accordingly both the parts, ii. 4-18 and 1-7, are connected with a *second* great section, in such a way that the prophet announces a series of chastisements upon the heathen nations, which find their climax in the destruction of Nineveh (comp. Introd. to Nahum); and which, although they are at the same time exhibitions of grace on the part of God toward Judah (comp. Nah. ii. 1), are nevertheless just as fruitless as the reproofs, exhortations, and threatenings of judgment, which He uttered and denounced against Israel himself (iii. 5). Accordingly, if the promise that the remnant should enter into the inheritance of the heathen, which is the necessary result, is to be fulfilled, Israel himself must first pass through the judgment. Neither ii. 4 ff., nor iii. 1 ff. speaks of this; therefore the day of judgment, which was described i.-ii. 3, can only be meant by it. And hence this second great division is connected with chap. i. as a double statement of the reason, for it also begins with 'Ε : the day of judgment upon the wickedness [mentioned] i. 4-6 is coming i. 7; ii. 3; for although Jehovah overthrows the heathen (ii. 4-18), yet Israel continues as he was (iii. 1-7). After iii. 7, the discourse, if the logical connection, according to our occidental mode of thinking, were to be completed, might return to i. 7. This is a frequent method with the prophets, to begin with that which is threatened, and then follow with a statement of the reasons. (Comp. above, p. 3, at the end.)

Instead of the repetition of chap. i. the further progress of the prophecy, which, consequently, according to the logical connection of the whole, is properly connected with [and resumes] the conclusion of the first part, ii. 3, is, in the *third* division, iii. 8-20, immediately joined with iii. 7. After the separate judgments ii. 4 ff., which fall upon the heathen severally in their own land, these same nations are assembled once more, in order that in a last great decisive battle with Jehovah their power may be broken, iii. 8; then they come into the kingdom of God [*treten sie zum Reiche Gottes hinzu*], iii. 9 f. Judah is purified by the judgment, chap. i., and his remnant inherits the promise: God is in the midst of him and his prisoners are restored (iii. 11-20).

The whole structure [*Gesamtzusammenhang*] of the prophecy is accordingly closely modeled after that of Obadiah: (1) Judgment, i. 1-ii. 3; (2) Moving cause, ii. 4-iii. 7; (3) Salvation, iii. 8-20. But it is evident that in the judgment there are several distinct parts [*Momente*]: (1) The immediately impending separate judgment upon the heathen nations, ii. 4-18; (2) the final judgment upon the heathen, iii. 8; (3) the judgment upon Israel, i. 7-14; iii. 11. All three parts together form the great world judgment, which is presented to view, i. 2 f.; and in their totality they form the condition [*Voraussetzung*] of the salvation.

#### 4. Historical Relations of the Prophecy.

The Scythians, who, contemporaneously with the fall of the Assyrian empire, marched through Hither Asia, laying it waste (comp. Introd. to Nahum, p. 10), entered also the territory of the Holy Land. Herodotus (i. 104) expressly states, that their march was directed through Syrian Palestine against Egypt, and that Psammetichus, King of Egypt, succeeded only by presents and entreaties, in restraining them from forcing an entrance into his territories. They marched back through the country of the Philistines, and the stragglers of their hordes plundered the sanctuary of the goddess at Ashkelon. (Comp. also Sync., ed. Dresd., p. 214.) The city of Bethshean is named Scythopolis after them, Jos. Ant., xii. 8, 5. (The etymology Σκυτόπολις recently favored by Hitzig, on Hos. x. 14, is far more improbable.) The passage, 2 Macc. xii. 30, and also Pliny (*Hist. Nat.*, v. 16), mention Scythians still dwelling there. The fact of their marching through is incontestable. And it certainly falls within the year 634, when Cyaxares was prevented by them from investing Nineveh, and 617, when Psammeticus died. (Comp. also Delitzsch, *Habakkuk*, p. xviii.; Ewald, *Gesch. Isr. Hist. of Israel*], iii. 746 ff.; M. v. Niebuhr, *Gesch. Assurs und Babels* [*Hist. of Assyria and Babylon*], pp. 67, 110, 187; M. Duncker, *Gesch. des Alterthums* [*Hist. of Antiquity*], i. 751 ff.)

To this expedition of the Scythians, for conquest, this prophecy has, in modern times, been referred (Cramer, Bertheau, Ewald, Hitzig). Now it is certainly scarcely to be denied, that among the enemies, by whom Jeremiah, the contemporary of Zephaniah, announces great devastations, chaps. iv.-vi., the Scythians are included; for the manner in which he

here and there describes them (the Scythians were a Mongolian tribe, Duncker, at the passage cited, i. 734, comp. Neumann, *Scythen in Hellenlande*, 231 ff., 264 ff.) as a strange, uncultivated, nomadic people (comp. namely, iv. 16 f.; v., xv. ff.; vi. 3), differs very much from that in which the dense military hosts of the Mesopotamian conquerors (*e. g.*, Is. v.; Hab. i.) are described. But in Zephaniah the matter is far from being very clear. The description of the devastation of the heathen lands, (chap. ii.) bears, as we see, a universal ideal character; for of the countries mentioned there Cush was not reached by them, Nineveh was not destroyed by them, and Moab and Ammon were probably scarcely touched by them. Just as little can the chief contents of the prophecy, in the judgment threatened upon Jerusalem, be applied to the Scythians. That the enemy falls upon the city from the north (comp. on i. 10 f.) is certainly not, as some interpreters think, decisive of its application to the Babylonians: the Scythians also came at first from the north; and the north side is the most accessible part of the city; but it is certainly likewise a purely ideal march: the harassing of the country from the north is, since Joel ii. 20, a permanent characteristic of all threatening prophecies. And moreover the final judgment by which the holy remnant is to be restored and to which *all* the heathen nations are to be gathered, is pressed, but with the most unnatural violence, to a special historical reference. There remains, viewed impartially, only a single passage, in which it seems that notice is taken of the expedition of the Scythians, and that is the reference to the taking possession of Philistia (ii. 6). Here the contact with Jer. vi. 3, and the reference to a migratory people are so apparent (ver. 7 is disjoined from ver. 6 by the intervening judgment of Israel), that it seems almost in accordance with a definite aim to exclude, as Küper, Maurer, Strauss, Delitzsch, and Keil do, the expedition of the Scythians, of which, however, Zephaniah, from the condition of his time, *must* have had knowledge; and yet for this aim [*Tendenz*] no rational ground can be seen. But it can be certainly said of this passage, in the first place, that the reference to the Scythians is not indispensably necessary (comp. on ii. 7), and, in the second place, that we are not yet necessitated to find, even in this reference, an immediately and directly historical expedition. As ii. 12 is taken from Nah. iii. 8 ff.; ver. 13 from Nah. ii.; so this march in the description of the day of judgment is taken from Jer. vi. 3. The description is an abstract one, which deals not so much with historical details as with the idea of the judgment, and hence prefers to fall back upon types, or examples. Both the obstinate support of the hypothesis of a Scythian expedition throughout the book, and the entire exclusion of the Scythians in favor of the individual application to the Babylonians, which is just as little indicated, show a want of the faculty of discriminating between special prediction (as Hab. i., Nah.) and general prophecy (as Is. xxiv. ff., xxxiv. f., Micah vi. 7).

[Keil's *Introd. to the O. T.* vol. i., p. 418: "Against the opinion of Cramer, Eichhorn, Mövers, Hitzig, Ewald, and E. Meier, that Zephaniah prophesied of the invasion of Palestine by the Scythians (Herod. i. 105), there are these considerations: (a.) That Zephaniah does not give any more precise designation of the enemy, i. 7, iii. 15; but that in Jer. iv.-vi., where there has likewise been the wish to find Scythians, the Chaldaean are most undoubtedly intended (comp. Küper, Jer., p. xiii. f.). (b.) That the very narrative in Herodotus leaves it doubtful whether invasion by the Scythians touched the kingdom of Jndah. (c.) That Zephaniah's prophecy of the conquest and destruction of Jerusalem, and of the chief cities of other kingdoms, does not suit the marauding incursions of the Scythians, who, like savage hordes as they were, did no more than plunder countries, and were satisfied with booty. Comp. Strauss, p. xviii. ff.; Häv., pp. 392-93; and Maurer, *Comment.*, ii. p. 572." — C. E.]

##### 5. Literary Character.

The form of representation of this prophet differs essentially from that of Nahum and Habakkuk. This lies, in the first place, in the more significant character of the contents. His language wants the plastic power and concinnity of expression, which spring from the powerful intuition of an immediately impending event: it is more suited to things than to events. He has in this respect his exemplar in Joel, who certainly excels him in the poetic coloring of his description. And this brings us to a *second* particular, to an individual peculiarity of Zephaniah. His prophecy lacks the sustained poetical character. However in this respect also he has his example, in single passages, in Micah (comp. *viz.* Micah iii.), as in the first his style is essentially influenced by Micah vi. 7, and, in general, he frequently reminds us of that prophet. He has even imitated him in individual embellishments of

speech, as *e. g.* the paronomasia of the names of cities, i. 4, without, however, attaining the weight of his powerful predecessor. Next to Micah the influence of Isaiah upon his mode of expression is everywhere manifest. Finally, peculiar to his style is the fullness of verbal allusions to earlier prophecies and to the Torah, by which it frequently receives a somewhat "abbreviatory" (Delitzsch) character. Yet this peculiarity [*Erscheinung*, phenomenon] has perhaps, under the immediate impression of the reading, been frequently exaggerated by interpreters. While they involuntarily and unconsciously add to the numerous points of agreement drawn from the earlier prophets also the not less numerous known expressions, which the later prophets have borrowed from him, it has become the custom with the majority of exegetes to treat him merely as a compiler, and *e. g.* in the inquiries concerning the age of controverted prophecies, instantly to urge the circumstance that the same constructions are found in Zephaniah that are found in them, as an argument for their higher antiquity. This is done by Delitzsch. But it is unfair. Although his style is more pathetic than poetic; although single figures are constantly occurring, which may appear exaggerated to the more than aesthetic taste of an Eichhorn; although here and there the form, but nowhere the peculiar color, the energetic rhythm of the prophetic parallelism, seems to be preserved; although finally he is well acquainted with the Scripture, and readily leads the spirit, that speaks by him, into turns of expression employed by his predecessors, yet this spirit, also in him, is one that is entirely independent and fully conscious. And the impressive deeply impassioned severity of his style, well deserves that his book should be designated, as *the dies iræ* of the Old Testament. (Comp. the Vulg. i. 15.)

#### 6. Position in the Organism of Scripture.

The division of the prophets, which has recently come into use, into an Isaian and a Jeremian series, according to which Delitzsch briefly states the characteristic of Zephaniah, by saying that he begins the Jeremian series, cannot, according to the remark under 5, and in general, be maintained. Each of the prophets has his peculiarity; and if, as we saw, the influence of Jeremiah upon Zephaniah is not to be mistaken, yet his peculiarity is not thereby impaired. Next to Jeremiah may be mentioned Joel, Micah, and also his immediate predecessor, Nahum, with whom in part internal relationship, and in part numerous points of contact (comp. the Exeget. Expos.), closely connect him.

His significance in the collection of the prophetic canon lies in the *first place* in the centre of his prophecy, the doctrine of the *judgment*. In no prophet is this doctrine so affluently set out, and so characteristically grasped as in him. The doctrine of the purifying judgment upon Israel, and that of the retributive judgment upon the powers of the world, which effected the redemption of Israel, and which are presented as they gradually come to light, the former in Isaiah and Micah, the latter in Obadiah, Isaiah, Micah, and Nahum, are combined in Zephaniah with the doctrine of the final judgment upon the whole heathen world, which, prefigured by Joel, by Ezekiel xxxviii. f., and Zechariah xii., is here expanded. By the side of the preceding separate prophecies of the judgment the prophecy of Zephaniah ranks as an apocalypse of the general judgment, which does not belong entirely to any of the four periods of prophecy relating to the judgment (comp. Com. on Obadiah, p. 14), but is one in which the rays of all meet and unite in a well arranged picture of the whole. And thus his significance in the *second place* is in general this, — that he is in a certain degree a thesaurus of the prophetic theology. For even of the other problems of prophecy a series of the most important is treated and placed in its necessary connection with the law and with the whole of the development of the kingdom. The words, in which Bucer in the preface to his commentary, assigns his reasons, why he undertook to expound this prophet: "*Brevis quidem ille, sed sensibus adeo secundus, ut omnium sane quæ prophetae reliqui quam libet magnis libris ad nos transmisserunt eleganter nobis epitomen composuisse recte dicatur,*" are, although somewhat extravagant (for, *e. g.*, Zephaniah does not have the doctrine of the personal Messiah), yet on the whole justly characteristic. Along with the prediction of the judgment the old prophetic theological phenomenon of the remnant, which receives the promise (*בָּנָה אֶשְׁפַּחַת אֶשְׁפַּחַת*), is brought into clear light (ii. 7; iii. 12 f.; comp. Ob. 17; Joel iii. 5; Am. v. 15; Is. vii. 3; xxxvii. 32; Micah v. 6 f.). So also the conversion of the heathen, iii. 9 ff.; comp. Is. xviii. ff.; the gathering of Israel effected by the return of the captives, iii. 19 f.; the grounding of salvation upon the pardoning grace of God, etc. Finally, there is a trait

peculiar to him, viz., the intimate relation of worship to the sanctification of the heart. If in the series of the threefold judgment before the salvation the incidents from the life of Elias are realized in history, 1 K. xix.; xi. f. (comp. also, i. 7 with 1 K. xviii. 40), so in the reproof of the mingling [of idolatry] with the service of God, i. 4 ff., we perceive a realization of : " How long halt ye between two opinions ? (1 K. xviii. 21.) And as Zephaniah considers the impurity of heart, calling for judgment, proved by this corruption of worship, so he describes the salvation by the pure lips with which the heathen praise Jehovah (iii. 9).

With respect to its *external position* in the Canon, it is certainly in time older than Habakkuk, and follows close upon Nahum. Yet it is, as it appears, for two reasons, placed in its present position : after Habakkuk, on account of the coincidence of his exordium, i. 6, with the conclusion of the properly prophetic discourse of Habakkuk, ii. 20 (ὅτι); and before Haggai on account of the coincidence of his ending iii. 20 with the beginning of Haggai i. 2 (παῦ). Comp. above, p. 3.

[“There was extant in the ancient Christian Church an apocryphal work in Zephaniah’s name (ἀνάληψις, or προφητεία τὸν Σοφούν προφήτου), out of which Clemens Alex. (*Strom.*, v. p. 585), and Pseudo-Epiphanius (*De Vitis Prophetarum*), quote passages. In the *Synopsis Scripturæ Sacrae*, and in Nicephorus, *Stichometria*, No. 9, it is added among the Apocryphal Books of the Old Testament, and its extent is stated as six hundred verses.”]

Bleek’s *Introd. to the Old Testament*, vol. ii. p. 157.

C. E.]

#### 7. Literature.

**SEPARATE COMMENTARIES.** Mart. Bucer, *Comment in Tzephanjam*, Argentor, 1528  
Martin Lutheri, *Comment. in Sophon. Prophet. Opera Latina*, t. iv.—C. E.] P. Höcke, *Zerglied-ende Auslegung der Propheten (Nahum, Habakkuk, und) Zephanjah*, Frankf., 1710, 4to. [Analytical exposition of the prophets (Nahum, Habukkuk, and) Zephaniah. J. H. Gebhardi : *Erklärung des Propheten Zephanjah* [Interpretation of the Prophet Zephaniah], Frankf. Aa. O. 1728, 4to. D. v. Cölln, *Spicilegium Observatt. Exeg. Critt. ad Zephanjae Vaticinia*, Vratisl., 1818, 4to. P. Ewald, *Der Prophet Zephanjah*, Erl., 1827. F. A. Strauss, *Vaticinia Zeph-anjah Comm. illustr.*, Berol., 1843.

**SEPARATE TREATISES.** J. A. Nolten, *De Prophetia Zephanja*, Franf. ad. V., 1719. Ikenius, *De Cemarim*, Bremæ, 1729, 4to. C. F. Kramer, *Scythische Denkmäler in Palästina* [Scythian monuments in Palestine], Kiel, 1777. C. Th. Anton, *Versio c. iii. Prop. Zeph. c. nova v. 18, interpret.*, Gorl., 1811, 4to. J. A. Herwig, *Beiträge zur Erläut. des Propheten Zepha-niah*, in Bengel’s *Archiv*, i. 3. [Contributions to the explanation of the prophet Zephaniah, in Bengel’s *Archives*, i. 3.]

**DEVOTIONAL.** Joh. Cäsar, 21 *Predigten über den Propheten Zephaniah*, Wittenb. [21 sermons on the prophet Zephaniah, Wittenberg], 1603.

[F. Delitzsch, art. “Zephanja,” in Herzog, *Real-Encyc.* L. Reinke, *Der Prophet Zeph-anjah*, 1868. Hitzig, Keil.

C. E.]

# ZEPHANIAH.

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## THE DAY OF JUDGMENT.

### CHAPTER I. 1-ii. 3.

*The Universality of the Judgment* (vers. 2, 3) : *it will destroy all the Idolaters in Judah and Jerusalem* (vers. 4-7) : *it will fall upon Sinners of every Rank* (vers. 8-13) : *it will burst irresistibly upon all the Inhabitants of the Earth* (vers. 14-18) : *a Call to Conversion* (chap. ii. 1-3). — C. E.]

1 The word of Jehovah, which was communicated to Zephaniah, the son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah, the son of Amariah, the son of Hiskiah [Hezekiah] in the days of Josiah, the son of Amon, king of Judah:

2 I will utterly destroy<sup>1</sup> everything from the face of the earth, saith Jehovah.

3 I will destroy man and beast :

I will destroy the fowls of heaven and the fishes of the sea,  
And the causes of offence<sup>2</sup> with the sinners ;  
And I will cut off man from the face of the earth,  
Saith Jehovah.

4 And I will stretch forth my hand over Judah,

And over all the inhabitants of Jerusalem ;  
And I will cut off from this place the remnant of Baal,  
The idol-priests,<sup>3</sup> together with the priests ;

5 And those who worship the host of heaven upon their roofs,

And the worshippers who swear to Jehovah,  
And who swear by their king ;<sup>4</sup>

6 And those who draw back from Jehovah,

Who do not seek Jehovah,  
And do not inquire for Him.

7 Be silent before the Lord Jehovah,

For the day of Jehovah is near ;  
For Jehovah has prepared a sacrifice,  
He has consecrated those whom He has invited.

8 And it shall come to pass in the day of Jehovah's sacrifice,

That I will visit [with punishment] the princes and the king's sons  
And all that wear foreign apparel.

9 And I will visit, in that day, every one that leaps over the threshold,

Those who fill the house of their Lord with violence and deceit.

- 10 And it shall come to pass in that day, saith Jehovah,  
 [That there shall be] the voice of crying from the fish-gate,  
 And howling from the lower city,<sup>5</sup>  
 And great destruction from the hills.
- 11 Howl ye inhabitants of the Mortar,<sup>6</sup>  
 For all the people of Canaan are destroyed,  
 All that are laden with silver are cut off.
- 12 And it shall come to pass at that time,  
 That I will search Jerusalem with candles,  
 And I will visit the men who lie upon their lees,  
 Who say in their hearts,  
 Jehovah will not do good, neither will He do evil.
- 13 And their wealth shall become a spoil,  
 And their houses a desolation ;  
 And they shall build houses and not inhabit **them**,  
 And plant vineyards and not drink their wine.
- 14 The great day of Jehovah is near ;  
 It is near and hasteth greatly ;  
 Hark ! the day of Jehovah,  
 Bitterly cries the mighty man there.
- 15 A day of [overflowing] wrath is that **day**,  
 A day of trouble and distress,  
 A day of ruin and desolation,  
 A day of darkness and gloom,  
 A day of clouds, and cloudy darkness ;
- 16 A day of the trumpet and of the war-cry  
 Against the fortified cities,  
 And against the lofty battlements.
- 17 And I will bring distress upon men,  
 And they shall walk as the blind ;  
 Because they have sinned against Jehovah,  
 Their blood shall be poured out like dust,  
 And their flesh like dung.
- 18 Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to deliver them  
 In the day of Jehovah's fury ;  
 And the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy [anger] ;  
 For He will make an end, yea a sudden one, to all the inhabitants of the earth

## CHAPTER II.

- 1 Bend<sup>7</sup> yourselves, bend ye people, that do not grow pale ;
- 2 Before the decree bring forth,  
 (The day passes away like chaff,)  
 Before the burning wrath of Jehovah come upon you,  
 Before the day of Jehovah's anger come upon you.
- 3 Seek Jehovah, all ye humble of the land,  
 Who have kept [wrought] his right [law] ;

Seek righteousness, seek humility ;  
Perhaps ye will be hidden in the day of Jehovah's wrath.

## TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 2 — מִשְׁמָרָתֶךָ, the infinitive of the verb מִשְׁמַרְנָא with the Hiphil of the cognate verb מִשְׁמַרְנָא. See Green's *Heb. Gram.*, sec. 282, a. LXX.: Ἐκλείψει ἀκλειπέτο; Vulg.: Congregans congregabo.

[2] Ver. 3. — הַמִּלְחָמָה שְׂלֹוחָתֶךָ, sing. *ruina*, Is. iii. 6; plur. *de idolis*, Zeph. i. 3. Ges., *Thes.*, s. v. לְשָׁלֹחַ, p. 721, b. LXX.: Καὶ ἀσθενήσονται οἱ ἀσθεῖς; Vulg.: et ruinæ impiorum erunt; Luth.: samint den Aergernissen, etc.; Kleinert und die Triemmer.

[3] Ver. 4. — הַמִּלְחָמָה, *sacerdotes idolorum*, 2 Kings xxiii. 5; Hos. x. 5. Ges., *Thes.*, s. v. בְּמָרֵב, p. 693, a. LXX.: τὰ ὄνοματα τῶν ἱερῶν; Vulg.: et nomina adituorum; Kleinert: die Namen der Pfaffen.

[4] Ver. 5. — מִלְכָה, pr. n. of an idol of the Moabites and Ammonites, e. g., Malcham. Ges.: "Name der Gottheit der Ammoniter, mit מִלְכָה eig. ident.", Jer. xlix. 1-3; Am. i. 15; Zef. i. 5." Fürst: *Heb. u. Chald. Handwörterbuch*. LXX.: τὸν βασιλέως αὐτῶν; Vulg.: Melchom; Luth.: Malchom; Kleinert, Melech. See Smith's *Diet. of the Bible*, s. v., "Malcham."

[5] Ver. 10. — הַמִּשְׁנֶה (the second), "Neh. xi. 9 et 2 Reg. xxii. 14, pars urbis secundaria vocabatur certa pars Hierosolymorum, fortasse nova quædam pars vel suburbium." Ges., *Thes.*, s. v., p. 1451, b. LXX.: ἀρδ τῆς θεούρεως; Vulg.: a secunda; Luth.: von dem andern Thor; Kleinert: von der Neustadt. Smith's *Dict. of the Bible*: "The mention of Huldah, the prophetess, introduces us to the lower city under the name of 'the Mishneh' (מִשְׁנֶה, A. V. 'college,' 'school,' or 'second part')." Vol. i. p. 994, b.

[6] Ver. 11. — שְׁלֹחָה, literally "the mortar," probably a deep hollow, so called from its resemblance to a mortar. See Exeget. ver. 11.

[7] CHAP. II. Ver. 1. — דְּחִיקָה שְׁלֹחָה וְקָרְשָׁה : The LXX., Vulg., and Luth. translate these words, as if they were derived from שְׁלֹחַ, *to gather*; but Kleinert prefers to derive them from שְׁלֹחַ, *to bend*. Ges. and Fürst take them from שְׁלֹחַ. — C. E.]

## EXEGETICAL.

On the heading compare the Introduction, I. The prophecy itself describes, like Nah. i. 1 ff., in an abstract manner, the judgment, in its internal, necessary character. It is —

(a) God's judgment, hence absolute (vers. 2, 3), but —

(b) In its relation to Israel, it has for its end the extermination of idolatry (vers. 4-6), so that it appears as a holy act, not merely as a slaughter, but as a sacrifice. (Ver. 7.)

To these introductory thoughts are joined —

(c) The description of the separate necessary acts of punishment (vers. 8-13); three strophes of two verses each, of which each is introduced by a בְּרִיתָה, and —

(d) A general characteristic of the terribleness of the day of judgment (vers. 14-18), finally —

(e) An exhortation to repentance before the judgment (ii. 1-3).

Vers. 2, 3: *The Universality of the Judgment*. From the very first the prophet characterizes his prophecy as a threatening one: I will sweep off, sweep off everything from the face of the earth. Instead of קָרְשָׁה, which we would expect, the prophet joins to the inf. abs. of the root קָרַשׁ the verb fin. of the cognate root קָרַב. Comp. on Hab. iii. 9, and Ewald, sec. 312 b, 3. The retrospective contrast to Micah ii. 11 cannot be mistaken; and just as little to be mistaken is the allusion to the Divine sentence, Gen. vi. 7.

Vers. 3: I will sweep off . . . in the sea. The creatures are affected by the universality of the judgment; connected by a community of interests with mankind, on whose account the judg-

ment takes place, they suffer with them. And the ruins, — the habitations of men, world, land, state, city (comp. Is. iii. 6), which go to wreck before the judgment of God, — together with the sinners, comp. Nah. i. 14. The meaning of offense [Aergerniss] (Luther, Strauss, Keil), for the word מִכְשָׁלָה, is not exactly ungrammatical, but it cannot be substantiated from the usage of the language. (It seems certainly to be presupposed, Matt. xiii. 41. Schmieder. [See note 2, ver. 3.—C. E.] I will certainly destroy men from the face of the earth, saith Jehovah.

Vers. 4-7: The edge of the judgment is directed against Judah and Jerusalem and the idolatry there. And I will stretch out my hand (the noted favorite expression of Isaiah, ix. 11 ff. comp. v. 25) over Judah . . . and I will destroy from this place the remnant of Baal, which the king had not yet destroyed. Comp. the Introd. 2. Baal stands for the worship of Baal (comp. Hos. ii.), as the explanatory appositional clause immediately following proves: the names of the idol-priests [Pfaffen], together with the priests [Priestern]. כְּמָרִים was the official designation of the priests of Baal (2 Kings xxiii. 5); these were entirely to disappear; this is what is meant by the destruction of the name (comp. Nah. i. 14). But, as we may certainly infer from the circumstance that the worship of Baal had been introduced into the Temple also (2 Kings xxiii. 4, comp. xvi. 11), the Cohanim too, priests of Jehovah, both in Israel and in Judah, had polluted themselves by their participation in idolatry.

[These, too, are to disappear, though their name, consecrated by the Torah [Law], cannot be removed. [Keil is of the opinion that the Ken-]

rim are not prophets of Baal, but, as in 2 Kings xxiii. 5, and Hos. x. 5, the priests appointed by the kings of Judah for the worship of the high places and the idolatrous worship of Jehovah. *Kōhānīm*, as distinguished from these, he considers idolatrous priests in the stricter sense of the word. — C. E.]

And as it befalls the priests, so is it to befall the worshippers of false gods [*Götzen*], ver. 5: And those who worship the host of heaven upon their roofs. [Comp. Jahn's *Bib. Arch.*, secs. 406 and 407, pages 518, 519, New York, Ivison & Co., 1866; also Thomson's *The Land and the Book*, vol. i. p. 52, New York, Harper & Brothers, 1859. — C. E.] This Babylonian worship (comp. Com. on Nahum, p. 36) was known already in the time of Moses (Deut. iv. 19).

The practice of it, as stated above, had its natural place on the open roofs; it had also been abolished by force in the period of the decline of the kingdom (2 Kings xxiii. 12; Jer. xix. 13); and had probably, before the spread of the Syro-phoenician service of Baal in Judah, been blended with this so as to form a syncretistic idolatry; comp. the name of Baal, Belsamen (בָּאֵל שְׁמַיִן), בָּאֵל שְׂמִיטָם (בעל שטם), in Hieron., *Aug. in Jud.*, iii. 449; comp. Plautus, *Panulus*, v. ii. 67. Here also, as at the end of ver. 4, those who blend the service of Jehovah with idolatry (comp. 1 Kings xviii. 21), are mentioned along with the direct worshippers of idols: And the worshippers, who swear to Jehovah, and, at the same time, swear by their king. Swearing is, according to the Old Testament view, a sign of the service of God and part of the confession [of Him]. Is. xix. 18; Am. viii. 14. The Vulgate pronounces the consonants מלכָם Milcom, which is the known name of the idol-god of the Ammonites. 1 Kings xi. 5. The Masorites read Malcāim, by their king; and in keeping with this the LXX. translate it κατὰ τοῦ Βασιλέως abrāw; however, they hardly thought of an earthly king; they translate also (1 Kings xi. 7) the idol-god Molech by Βασιλεύς (comp. Jer. xxxii. 35: τῷ Μολὼν βασιλεῖ). This is the one here intended; at the same time we must assume that he had been admitted into the syncretism of the Ahaz-Manasseh idol-worship in Jerusalem (2 Kings xvi. 3). (According to the signification of the name he may as well have corresponded, in the southern cultus of Canaan, to the Baal of the northern cultus, *vide* Cölln.) Here the name does not appear in the Canaanitish form Molech (LXX., Moloch), peculiar to the idol, but in the pure Hebrew form Melech. The prophet purposely changes the names of the idols, in order to characterize the worthless [*das zusammengebettelte*, scraped together by begging] and intrinsically baseless character of these idolatries as opposed to the worship of the One Jehovah. To the actual apostates he adds (ver. 6), the great number of the careless and despisers: and those . . . who do not ask for Him, who by this negative conduct prove the apostasy of their hearts. Comp. 1 Chron. xv. 13. [The whole of this entire enumeration (vers. 4–6) shows a gradual progress from gross external to refined internal idolatry. “The Lord will destroy (1) the remnant of the idols of Baal; (2) the company of their servants; (3) the worshippers of the idols, who content themselves with altars without images, but worship publicly upon the house-tops; (4) the secret worshippers; (5) those who, without practicing idolatry, have apostatized from

God in their hearts; (6) The indifferentists.” — Schmieder.]

The judgment comes upon all these, ver. 7: Be silent before the Lord Jehovah. The graphic particle חַדֵּד is borrowed from Am. vi. 10 (comp. Zech. ii. 17). The silence lies here, as in Hab. ii. 20, between the preparative announcement and the description of the judgment. While the prophet is deeply occupied in thinking of its coming, he assumes as it were the character of a herald of God who first proclaims what is now about to come to pass, and then when it arrives he enjoins silence. That the “silence” serves as a *facte linguis* to the introduction to the holy sacrificial act (Hitzig), is a view borrowed not from the Old Testament, but from the profane classics. Keep silence, “for the day of Jehovah is near.” [This is the reason for the command to “keep silence.” — C. E.] Zephaniah makes his announcement culminate in the noted formula of threatening, which pervades prophecy from Ob. 15 forward (comp. Joel i. 15; iv. 14), and at the same time gives along with it the theme for the subsequent representation. He immediately defines more precisely the character of this day: for Jehovah has prepared a sacrifice.

חַדֵּד is here, as in Is. xxxiv. 6; Jer. xlvi. 10 [and Ezek. xxxix. 17 — C. E.], not an abstract of the verb חַדֵּד, to slaughter (*caedes*, Ges., *Thes.*, Maur.), but, as it is everywhere, a sacrifice. And, indeed, where it stands absolutely, it is synonymous with the fuller term, tech. זֶבַח שְׁלֹמִים, peace-offering; the kind of offering, in which only certain parts of the victim were burned and a feast prepared of the rest. [Hence in contrast not only to מְנֻחָה, the bloodless, and to קָרְבָּנָה, the sin-offering, but also to עַלְהָה, the burnt-offering, Lev. xvii. 8.] This connection of ideas suggests the clause: and he has consecrated those whom he has invited. Kräum, those who are invited to the feast, as in 1 Sam. ix. 13. The heathen nations, whom Israel are about to destroy, are meant; hence the wider thought is taken from Is. xiii. 3, that they are consecrated by God for the destruction of the impious one (*ἀφωρισμένοι εἰς τούτο*, Theodoret): they come not only as allies, but also as executors of the holy act in consideration. On the day of God there will also be brought by holy hands a holy offering, and it will be consumed by those whom God has invited: but the victim is not an animal, but his people; those who slay it are not priests, and those who feast on it are not confederates of the people, but strangers.

Vers. 8–13. The first detailed statement in the amplification of ver. 7. *The Three Acts of Punishment.* The first, vers. 8, 9, falls upon the princes, who indulge in the customs of the heathen. And it shall come to pass . . . upon the mighty ones, the dignitaries of state, the heads of tribes and families, from whose opposition, as was formerly the case with the reforms of Hezekiah (Micah iii.), so also now those of Josiah were likely to meet with their strongest resistance, and who in influence, might indeed surpass the royal princes, as is the case in the present day in the kingdoms of the East. Hence these latter are mentioned in the second place. “The sons of Josiah (1 Chron. iii. 14), Jehoakim and Jehoahaz, being both still of a tender age, cannot be meant, but only brothers or uncles.” Hitzig. Comp. Introd. I. The

reason why the judgment is to fall upon these especially — the king is exempted (comp. 2 Kings xxii. 18 ff.) — immediately follows: upon all, who clothe themselves with foreign apparel. “*Mihū ḥon dubium est, quin illo aro alii Egyptios in v-stitu initarentur, alii Babylonios, prout huc aut illi genti studebant.*” Drusius. The strange apparel shows the estranged heart; the infringement of the popular manners and the contempt of the national costume evince the decay of the national spirit. Moreover the law by no means treats of clothing as an adiaphoron (Dent. xxii. 11; Lev. xix. 19). And so then among these princes it appears that the desire after strange clothing goes hand in hand with the desire of the heart to apostatize from the worship of the true God, ver. 9: *And I will visit in that day every one that leaps over the threshold.* It belonged to the ceremonial, in the worship of the Philistine god Dagon, to leap over the temple threshold, which was considered sacred and not to be touched (1 Sam. v. 5). The Chaldaean briefly paraphrases it: all who follow the usages of the Philistines. Those who fill the house of their lords with violence and deceit. As the prophet was speaking of leaping over the threshold, the connection requires that we look for the house behind this threshold, and consequently that we understand the lords to mean idols, whom they serve and to whom they carry their unjustly acquired treasures. לְבָנָן, according to the signification of the word, is equivalent to בָּעֵל (comp.

the plural בָּעֵלים, 1 Sam. vii. 4). So also Cölln; Hitzig would understand the passage so as to mean that those who are reprehended regard the palace of the king as an idol-temple, and bring into it deceit and violence. But that would be a pompous way of expressing it; and Josiah would hardly have suffered it. In a similar way Bucer, Ewald, and Keil [understand the passage]. The conjecture that ordinary servants and masters (Strauss) are meant, does not agree with the context.

[Keil: In ver. 9 a, many commentators find a condemnation of an idolatrous use of foreign customs; regarding the leaping over the threshold, as an imitation of the priests of Dagon, who adopted the custom, according to 1 Sam. v. 5, of leaping over the threshold when they entered the temple of that idol. But an imitation of that custom could only take place in temples of Dagon, and it appears perfectly inconceivable that it should have been transferred to the threshold of the king's palace, unless the king was regarded as an incarnation of Dagon, — a thought which could never enter the minds of Israelitish idolaters, since even the Philistine kings did not hold themselves to be incarnations of their idols. If we turn to the second hemistich, the thing condemned is the filling of their masters' houses with violence; and this certainly does not stand in any conceivable relation to that custom of the priests of Dagon; and yet the words “who fill,” etc., are proved to be explanatory of the first half of the verse, by the fact that the second clause is appended without the copula *Vav*, and without the repetition of the preposition בְּ.

Now, if a fresh sin were referred to here, the copula *Vav*, at all events, could not have been omitted. We must therefore understand by the leaping over the threshold, a violent and sudden rushing into houses to steal the property of strangers (Calvin, Ros., Ewald, Strauss, and

others), so that the allusion is to “dishonorable servants of the king, who thought that they could best serve their master by extorting treasures from their dependants by violence and fraud” (Ewald).

**בְּנֵי־יְהוָה**, of their lord, i. e., of the king, not of their lords:” the plural is in the *plurale maiestatis*, as in 1 Sam. xxvi. 16; 2 Sam. ii. 5, etc. — C. E.]

The second act of punishment, vers. 10, 11, falls (11 c) upon the rich. *And it shall come to pass . . . that a woe-ful cry shall be heard from the fish-gate, which also occurs in 2 Chron. xxxiii. 14; Neh. iii. 3; xii. 39, and which, according to Hieron., led to Joppa, so that the nearest way to the sea passed through it; according to Neh. iii. 3, however (comp. Robinson, *Pal.*, ii. 118), it did not lead westward, but northward from the city, and howling from the lower city.* The New City, literally, the second city, is the name of a part of the city (2 Kings xxii. 14; comp. Neh. xi. 9; Jos., *Ant.*, xv. 11. 5), probably of the suburb situated to the north (lower city, Robinson, Strauss), in which the Fish Gate was situated, and whence from the natural situation, — for on the other side Jerusalem is protected by the ground, — the attack of the enemies was to be expected. [See note 5 on ver. 10. — C. E.] *And great destruction from the hills.* לְהַלְלָה taking the place of the verb, as in Nah. iii. 2, is construed, according to the sense, with all three substantives.

Ver. 11. *Howl, ye inhabitants of the Mortar* — evidently, from the context, also a section of Jerusalem, but whose situation cannot be more exactly defined. מִכְחַת, a mortar, then a cavity, as, e. g., that in which the teeth are set (Judges xv. 19), will, understood as a locality, designate that part of the city situated in the hollow (Theodotion: ἐν τῷ βάθει); and it lies, we may suppose, nearest to the valley between Moriah and Zion, the locality subsequently known as the Cheesemongers' valley [Tyropœon]. For all the merchant people are silent, entirely destroyed (Ps. xlix. 13; comp. also ver. 7 above), cut off are all those that are laden with silver. The context, which is concerned throughout with localities and wholly with the judgment of the city, shows that יְמִינָה כְּבָשָׂעָה does not designate the inhabitants of all Canaan. And it is intended to consider “Jerusalem indicated by Canaan as far as it is of a Canaanitish, i. e., of an idolatrous character” (Hengstenberg, Strauss). On the other hand the parallelism shows that the people in question are rich. Accordingly we must suppose that יְמִינָה כְּבָשָׂעָה, as in other places פְּנַעֲנִי (Job xl. 30 [A. V. xli. 6]; Prov. xxxi. 24; comp. also, Ob. 20), or even simply פְּנַעַץ (Is. xxiii. 8), designates the traders and merchants (Grot., Cölln). That these as the more recent comers to the great city should dwell in the outlying new parts of it, is not strange, but natural. [If Hitzig were right in placing the New City, according to the Targum, on Ophel, then it would be still more natural and still more characteristic to seek for the dwellings of the merchants here also. Comp. above, p. 68 a, and Matt. xxi. 12.] [Keil: “The name ‘mortar’ was probably coined by Zephaniah, to point to the fate of the merchants and men of money who lived there. They who dwell there shall howl, because ‘all the people of Canaan are

destroyed.' These are not Canaanitish or Phoenician merchants, but Judean merchants, who resembled the Canaanites or Phoenicians in their general business (see at Hos. xii. 8), and had grown rich through trade and usury." — C. E.]

The third act of punishment (vers. 12, 13), falls upon the careless despisers. And it will come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with candles. Theodoret: Οὐδὲ εἰς τὰν ὄφειλόντων δίκην διαφέγγεται τὴν τιμωρίαν, ἀλλὰ πάντας αὐτοὺς διάδοσι σφαγήν. And I will visit the men, who lie upon their lees,—like old wine which is not drawn off (comp. Jer. xlvi. 11),—and say in their hearts: Jehovah does no good and no evil. He may perhaps exist, but He does nothing to us. "בְּאַתָּה תִּמְלֹיכָה" expresses the spiritual obduracy of those who deny the agency of God in the world (Jer. x. 5), and who, in the opinion that chance governs the world, despise exhortation and warning, and live from one day to another." — Hitzig. By such practical denial of the judgment (comp. Ps. x. 11 f.), they call it down upon them (comp. Ps. l. 21 ff.).

Ver. 13. Their goods, in which they take pleasure, will become plunder, in the midst of the wild alarm of the owners, and their houses desolation. And — what the law and the prophets predicted (Deut. xxviii. 30; Am. v. 11) is fulfilled, — they will build houses and not dwell in them, and plant vineyards and not drink their wine. The apodeses contain the proper threatenings in the future; thereby the preterites receive in the protases the signification of the *Fut. exactum*.

Vers. 14–18. Second detailed statement in the amplification of ver. 7. *The Dreadfulness of the Day of Judgment.* The day of Jehovah is near, the great [day] (Joel ii. 14 (11?)) it is near and hastens greatly. בְּאַתָּה תִּמְלֹיכָה is not the participle with מ omitted (Hitz.); but the adverbial infinitive (Joel ii. 5) construed with the verb קָרְבָּן (comp. Ew., sec. 280 c). Hark (as in Nah. iii. 2), the day of Jehovah? What is to be heard? bitterly cries the hero there. ["בְּיֹם, before *yom* Yehōvāh (the day of Jehovah), at the head of an interjectional clause, has almost grown into an interjection (see at Is. xiii. 4). The hero cries bitterly, because he cannot save himself, and must succumb to the power of the foe." Keil. — C. E.] בְּאַתָּה is not purely local, but generally indicates the situation like our "there" ["da'"]. Comp. Nah. iii. 15; Ps. xiv. 5. a day of wrath is that day (Is. xix. 18), a day of anguish and pressure (Job xv. 24) a day of desolation and devastation (Job xxx. 3; on the emphatic reduplication compare Nah. ii. 11); and it is accompanied not only by terrible signs of destruction upon earth, but also by the troubous agitation of the elements: a day of darkness and gloom (Joel ii. 2), a day of clouds and of cloudy darkness (Deut. iv. 11)—a day of the reappearance of Jehovah amidst the same signs as on Sinai. Comp. on Hab. iii.

Ver. 16. A day of the trumpet and of the war cry [*des Geschmetters*, battering]. The sound of the trumpet introduces God's holy festival (Num. xxix. 1 ff.; comp. ver. 7 above); it is the signal for the proclamation of God's power over the sinful people (Hos. viii. 1); it is the war-signal of desolation (Am. ii. 2). All three significations are realized in the day of Jehovah's holy sacrifice;

and the last especially (comp. Jos. vi. 5) over the fortified cities and high battlements, behind which the wicked people vainly imagine themselves secure (Micah v. 10 [11]).

Ver. 17. Yea, I will put the people in distress, so that they will walk like blind men,— groping about here and there as insecurly (comp. Dent. xxviii. 29; Nah. ii. 5), — for they have sinned against Jehovah; so then their blood shall be poured out (term. technicus in legislation pertaining to sacrifice, comp. ver. 7) like dust, — in such quantity (Gen. xiii. 16) and with such contempt (2 Kings xiii. 7), — and their bowels (comp. 2 Sam. xx. 10, properly the contents of the bowels, their food, equivalent to בְּבָשָׂר, Job xx. 23. So also Strauss, Cölln, Gesenius, Ewald; Hitzig, according to the Arab., "their flesh"), like dung.

Ver. 18. Neither their silver, nor their gold — all the classes, whom the prophet, ver. 8 ff., declared obnoxious to the judgment, were somehow entangled in silver and gold, — will deliver them (בְּנֵם נַסְעָה וְ...), neither, nor, as in Ex. v. 14. Compare the repetition of the whole passage, Ezek. vii. 19, in the day of Jehovah's fury; and in the fire of His wrath (comp. 2 Kings xxii. 17), shall the whole earth be devoured; for He will make an end, yea (כִּי, as in Ps. lxxiii. 1), a sudden one, to all the inhabitants of the earth כָּלָה וְ... is construed, like i. 8, as a second accusative; literally, He makes all the inhabitants of the earth a destruction.

Chap. ii. vers. 1–3. *The Exhortation.* The first words, חֲדַר קָרְשָׁו and קָרְשָׁו interpretum. Interpreters derive them from the root קָרְשָׁ, to which the subst. שָׂרֶב, stubble, belongs; and from which a Poel שָׂרְשָׁ, Ex. v. 7–12; Num. xv. 32 f.; 1 Kings xvii. 10–12, with the signification of "gather," is found. From this the Hitp. reflexivum combined with the Kal for the purpose of strengthening it (comp. Is. xxix. 6; Hab. i. 5), may be derived in the present instance. Some attempt, in the most different ways, to bring into the context the signification of "gather." Either, collect yourselves in the devotional sense ["applied to that spiritual gathering which leads to self-examination, and is the first condition of conversion." Keil. — C. E.]; as we use the word in German (Strauss, Keil); or, withdraw, keep yourselves at a distance, sc. from that which is unclean (Hitzig); or assemble yourselves, sc. for a fast [*Bussfeier*, a penitential solemnity — C. E.] (Chald., Syr., Hier., Cölln). It is scarcely to be denied that by all these interpretations violence is done to the words, and yet in the end no suitable meaning is evolved. In view of these difficulties it seems to me that we should without hesitation, have recourse to the root, קָרְשָׁ from which the Hebrew is possessed of the derivative חֲדַר קָרְשָׁה, bow, which in Arabic (namely, in the v. conj. corresponding to the Hitp.) has the signification of *incurvatus est*. The forms are the Hithpolel and Polel (קָרְשָׁשָׁה = קָרְשָׁה, comp. בְּכָרְשָׁה, instead of בְּכָרְשָׁפָה, Job xxxi. 15), unless one prefers to consider the Dagesch forte in קָרְשָׁה as a Masoretic addition, and the form a

**imperative Kal.** Accordingly, we translate [the words], bend yourselves, bend (comp. the **בָּENT**, the bent, ver. 3); and this translation agrees well with the following vocative clause: O nation (article in the voc., Ges., see. 109, Rem. 2), that dost not grow pale. The primitive signification of the root, **חִזְקָה**, is *pallescere* (comp. **חַזְקָה**); and this signification is evidently to be preferred in this place (Grot., Ges., Cölln, Ew., Hitz., Keil) to the more common one to "long after" (Rosenmüll., Häver., Strauss). The people that do not grow pale (comp. Is. xxix. 22; Prov. vii. 13) are the insolent, audacious people (LXX. *ἄθροις ἀταίδεντός*) who sit erect, at ease upon their money bags (comp. i. 12); and whom the prophet hence exhorts to bend themselves, before the stroke comes from above.

Ver. 2. **Before the law bring forth.** [This is the reason for the appeal, ver. 1.—C. E.] The law is neither the appointed time (Cölln), nor yet the statute of the prophecy, the decree declared in it (the other interpreters), but, as in Micah vii. 11, the Mosaic Law, *in specie* Deuteronomy, which is most familiar to our prophet; that which it brings forth is the curse, which it places in view, the day of wrath itself (Deut. xxxi. 17). For everything brings forth what is in it: the earth brings forth plants (Is. lv. 10); the wicked, mischief (Joh. xv. 35). And this bringing forth on the part of the law will come with unexpected speed: ver. 2, as swiftly (Is. xxix. 5) as chaff does the time pass away, which still remains for repentance. It is evident that we must understand by **בָּאֵת** in this place also, as in chap. i., the judgment day (Strauss); but the **בָּאֵת** agrees only with the interval of time passing rapidly away; the word does not mean to approach, to draw on, not even in the passage, Nah. iii. 19, cited for that purpose [to prove that it means to approach, etc.—C. E.] by Strauss. After this short parenthesis the prophet resumes the structure of the sentence with which he commenced: **before the wrath of Jehovah . . . . come upon you.**

Ver. 3. **Seek Jehovah, all ye humble of the land:** **לְעֹנוֹת הָאָרֶץ**, an idea very frequent in the Psalms, at first rare in the prophets, but then always coming prominently into view: the quiet, the humble in the land, whose righteous conduct is especially manifested in their separation from the proud (i. 8 ff.) in lowliness and humility before God (comp. Micah vi. 8).—**Ye who have observed his right** [law—C. E.]—have not loved strange apparel and practised idolatry—**seek righteousness, seek humility:** the exhortation is addressed to all, who in general are still willing to hear (comp. ver. 1): perhaps you may yet be hidden in the day of Jehovah's wrath.

#### DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

The separation of the godly-minded race from the ungodly-minded is a fundamental principle [*Grundpfeiler*, foundation-pillar] of the order of the kingdom of God. When both races were at the first intermingled, the fruit of the union was the Deluge (Gen. vi.). Hence nothing was so distinctly enjoined by God when He founded his kingdom anew with Abraham and Moses as the going out from fatherland and kindred, the segregation, if one word the sanctification of the

nation for Himself. But gradually, during the decline of the kingdom, the amalgamation of the kingdom of God and of the idolatry of the world again crept in. A clear separation between the nature of Jehovah and that of idols is yet scarcely possible, and the substance of the national life is infected by the godless influences that had flowed in; partly, in such a way that the community make themselves guilty of idolatry, partly because a corrupting deposit of complete indifference was formed. Therefore, Zephaniah announces a new deluge. Comp. i. 2 f. with Gen. vi. 7.

Religion and morality are two spheres which cannot be separated. An upright heart can have only one God, and in cherishing other gods besides God lies a falseness, which bears its fruit in the field of morals. Whilst the heart, in its profoundest depths, is actuated by two diametrically opposite opinions, it is necessary that these influences should finally neutralize one another. In this way arises indifference toward motives drawn from eternal things. This indifference has a two-fold result: First, temporal motives, among which the most powerful are pride (fashion) and avarice, take the place of eternal. In the second place, the other result of this fearless, practical atheism is: God does no good and no evil.

In the O. T. atheism has always its baneful effect in the sphere of the practical. It is not so much a denying of the divine existence, as of the divine judgment. Comp. Ps. xiv. As the wisdom of the pious man is fear of God, so the folly of the godless man is fearlessness of God. "The godless say in their hearts: God does no evil and no good" (i. 12). What does the phrase, "in their hearts," mean? Although shame and fear deter men from publicly exhibiting their unrighteousness, yet they utter those thoughts secretly, and are of the opinion that God either does not exist, or that He sits tranquilly in heaven. This is the very climax of godlessness, when men, intoxicated with sensual pleasure, divest God of his office of judge: when He is not recognized as judge, what remains of his godhead? The majesty and the kingdom of God do not consist in any visionary splendor, but in duties, which belong so entirely to Him alone, that they cannot be separated from his being. To Him it belongs to own, to govern the world, to care for the human race, to distinguish between good and evil, to succor the miserable, to punish crime, to suppress unjust power. He who deprives Him of this retains an idol." Calvin. The theocratic atheism<sup>1</sup> is foreign to the O. T., as in general abstract thinking is not a Biblical idea. "When the Scripture speaks of thinking, it includes the will with it, and gives us to understand that thinking and willing are one and the same act in man. For a living man so thinks, that he at the same time loves, hates, hopes, fears the thing of which he thinks, is inclined or averse to it; he so wills that he wills *λογουσῶς*, and he cannot will, without at the same time thinking of that which is willed. The thoughts do not precede the will, but they include it, and are in a certain manner intellectual acts of the will. It is evident that neither the imagination and purpose (Gen. vi. 5), nor the doubting or joyful thoughts nor the crafty and especially political thoughts (Prov. xii. 5), nor, in general, the word **בָּשָׁר** with its derivatives, can be correctly interpreted

[Kleinert has "Der theokratische Atheismus: he probably wrote "Der theoretische Atheismus ... C. E.]

if we separate the will from them. It is nowhere said that thoughts have guided, disordered, or misled the will; but it is said that man is misled by them, or walks after them. The Scripture ascribes also to the thoughts malice, injustice, and perversity, which could not be done, unless they were, at the same time, acts of the will." Roos.

As the error of atheists is act [practical], so also they can be made sensible of it only by act. The light, under which they apprehend it, is likewise the light of the approaching judgment, with which God punishes them. They are accustomed to look upon everything that happens, in a fatalistic manner, as a necessary cycle of sowing and harvesting, of building and possessing, and to disregard the factor of divine grace lying at the foundation of the whole. Therefore God must break up at once this cycle; He must cause the fruit to fail the seed, the inhabitancy to fail the building: then they become aware that He exists. Then the insolent heroes cry bitterly.

The most pernicious fruit of indifference is the shamelessness, which no longer turns pale. "Shame is the first prophetess, when thou turnest aside, the first that beckons thee back again to the land of peace, — [it is] consciousness of guilt, an arrow of conscience, a ray of God Almighty in the very act, a turning back of the course of our blood and thoughts, of our sea of emotions and instincts; a *perávora* of our body." Herder. As the extinction of shame indicates, in the individual man, the beginning of a hopeless condition, so does it also in the life of a nation. So long as the whole body of the people retains a feeling of shame, many individual, even heinous sins, may be borne, without serious injury to the whole. But if that ceases, then the enormity of individual crimes, considered, in comparison with earlier times, may perhaps prove a kind of progress in civilization, and yet the condition of the whole may have become thereby a much more vicious one. Even that progress commonly lies in the laxity of the moral judgment.

However unexpectedly the acts of God come, their seeds, nevertheless, always exist anyhow already in the present, and they are disposed into the continuity of one divine guidance of the kingdom from the beginning forward. The seed of the judgment lies in the law. This fact implies that the judgment is not merely a negative, but a positive act of God. It is a birth, although a birth under the form of death.

The decisive turning-point, which from the Old Testament history of the kingdom takes the direction of that of the New Testament, is the abandonment of the nation as such by the prophets. Zephaniah discriminates between an ecclesia in the ecclesia, and this exhortation, so far as hope is expressed in it, is intended for this congregation of the lowly and humble.

With this begins the stand-point of the abandonment, which, continued by the later prophets, has its ultimate fulfillment in the beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount. At the same time a Messianic progress lies in this apparent retrogression. Because, viz., the internal condition of a humble mind takes the place of the external one of national relationship, a new point of view determines their adoption to salvation. In this view even those who are not Israelites may fulfill the preliminary conditions of salvation (Acts x. 35). To the *Anarach* — humility well pleasing to God — belongs also the renunciation of the particular privileges of descent from Abraham.

**COCCEIUS:** The day of the Lord, in the widest sense, is that time in which God proves Himself as King, Lord, and Judge: in a narrower sense, it is that day which all the prophets have longed to see, — the day of the appearance of God in the New Covenant. Accordingly the day of the Lord is to be understood principally of the advent of the Messiah in the flesh, which is connected with the judgment upon the unbelieving; but moreover it is also to be understood of the immediate forerunner of that day. So Zephaniah announces as its precursor and herald another day along with the destruction of offenses, and purification by means of the Babylonian captivity. And where the prophets speak of the times after the advent of Christ, the day of the Lord is the last judgment day, which times, like the destruction of Jerusalem and the Reformation, precede, like trumpets, and announce the coming of the Lord to the kingdom of the world and to the final judgment.

**STRAUSS:** Thus a sacred edifice is built before our eyes, whose foundation stands on God's righteous love and our sin; to which every act of punishment and every manifestation of grace adds a stone, on which finally, after the close of all history, the crown is set by the judgment of the world.

#### HOMILETICAL.

*What must we do in order to escape (ii. 3) the coming wrath (i. 2; iii. 7)?*

1. *Seek righteousness:* turn yourselves —

(a) From the unrighteousness of a divided heart, which would give a part to God and a part to idols (i. 4, 5.)

(b) From the unrighteousness of a cold heart which does not care for God, and deprives Him of the honor due to Him. (i. 6.)

2. *Seek humility:* turn —

(a) From the pride of sensual pleasure. (i. 8, 9.)

(b) From the pride of avarice. (i. 9–12.)

3. *Do it speedily,* for —

(a) The day is coming shortly. (i. 14 ff.)

(b) Helpless is the situation of those who meet it unprepared. (i. 17; ii. 1.)

(c) The Word of God is unchangeable. (ii. 2 a.)

(d) The time quickly passes away. (ii. 2 b.)

On ver. 2 f.: We have in the best case our pleasure in the wonderful power and wisdom of God, who has made all things in the world so glorious, and who governs them so well. We think too little of the fact, that as everything is from Him, so He can make an end of everything at once. To the godless man, who does not see in the universe the creative hand of one God, the whole world is a heap of ruins. No wonder that he feels, in judgment and in death, as if the ruins were falling over him. To the pious man, however, in this painful moment, the anticipative recognition of the divine ordering [of the world — C. E.] is a strong support [*säule*, pillar]: he has consolation in his death. Prov. xiv. 32. How much has God to judge in the heart, if He will destroy "the remnant of Baal." The service of the one God is the most simple, and yet for the regulation of life the most difficult; all are involuntarily synergists, and the heart is full of altars. How many a one kindles a fire for the truth, but in the impure flame one must perceive that the altar, on which he kindles it, is erected, not to God, but to the idol of his sordid zeal. Every idol is a master; one may call it Baal, or Moloch, or Adon (ver. 9): the meaning

of the words is the same ; he who does not serve God is all the more a slave. (Rom. vi. 16-19.) And his is indeed a slavery to unrighteousness, for none of the idols which we honor has surpassed us in anything, that we should be under obligation to recompense it. — Ver. 6. He who does not ask after God, is to be considered *eo ipso* an apostate. There is an indifference in external peace, which is worse than direct hostility against God, because more hopeless. He who flatters such indifference, as if it were piety, is also a servant of unrighteousness. — Ver. 7. One thing is wanting in this sacrifice of the Old Testament, — the purity of the victim. The perfect sacrifice of the divine judgment of wrath is Jesus Christ. In this God has also sanctified his guests; in spite of themselves and without knowing it, Caiphas and Herod and Pilate are obliged to bear testimony to God. — Ver. 8 f. Those who wear soft raiment are in kings' houses. Even where a righteous king rules, court air is a dangerous air, and whoever is placed in it must keep a threefold watch over his heart ; that he do not fall into vicious habits ; that he do not practice idolatry with earthly things ; that he do not, without intending it, by means of adulation, partisan conduct, or by laziness, heap up deceit and crime. An upright heart finds the way even here (Jer. xxxviii. 7 ff.). An evangelical minister should not dishonor the house of his God by a strange dressing of his body and imitation of strange ceremonies. Whoever thinks to increase the property [*Habe*] of God by dishonest means, legacy-hunting, etc., makes God an idol. — Ver. 10 f. Trade and traffic are good things ; but they are not the pillars, on which a kingdom stands firm. — Ver. 11. If men allow the light to go out in their heart and conscience (Ps. cxix. 105), God must set up his light. Although they do not come to the light, yet the time is coming when they will not be asked whether they will come or not. — Ver. 12. A knowledge of God's existence does not determine the salvation of the soul. With it the soul may become corrupt and perish. The life of man is action, and piety is found, where the will conforms itself to the acts of God. Such a man cannot remain at ease, for in the kingdom of God there is everywhere much to do. — Ver. 13. It is painful to be obliged to forsake his goods and the work of his hands. And yet this is the lot of all, who have obtained possession of only earthly things, and who have been occupied with earthly things. They come to the judgment with hands entirely empty. For such (ver. 14) the day of God is always too near. Then all those, who, as long as they were in full possession of their earthly goods and powers, were esteemed by every one mighty heroes, become cowards. For what they esteemed power was not their own. — Ver. 15 ff. How does he quake, who from all his possessions, plans, and devious ways has been cast into the solitary prison. What must it be only to be inclosed by God's prison ? There even the stoutest bulwarks of the heart break in pieces before the sound of God's trumpet. There even the most ingenious plan is like the groping of a blind man. For the things with which man is accustomed to plan and to act, refuse their service. There even the most audacious head must bow (ii. 1). — Ver. 2. We need not tremble before the dark powers of the world, which are pregnant with mischief and destruction ; but before that, by which the law of God, which judges us, is pregnant. Thanks to God that He himself has begotten the Son, who has destroyed the curse engendered

by the law. But make haste to be saved. In the whole Gospel we read only of one, who was saved at the twelfth hour ; for how many has the time passed away. In the O. T. the "day of the Lord" is the day of wrath : in the N. T. it is the day of joy. — Ver. 3. Mere humiliation and fear are of no use ; by them one may attempt many foolish expedients (Micah vi. 6 ff.; Gen. iv. 13 ff.; Matt. xxvii. 5). Positive action must accompany them : the seeking of God with the whole heart and an assurance of deliverance founded on faith. It is no contradiction, therefore, when it is said, Ye humbled ones seek humility. The disposition produced by the preaching of judgment must become conscious action and steadfast way.

**LUTHER:** Ver. 4. The pious king effected this much, that idolatry did not rule. Nevertheless some always remained. And we have no reason yet to hope, that were we going to suppress all ungodly practices in the same way, all men would become pious. For if that could have been done, it would certainly have been done by this king, who was considered preëminently faithful, over the law and service of God. The Chemarim were a remarkable people and well disciplined in the idolatrous service, for they took their name from their earnest and great devotion. They produced an erroneous opinion among the people, that they were of all others the most assiduous in religion and divine worship. I am entirely of the opinion that they were such people as the monks of the present day are. — Ver. 8. It is evident that he speaks of the most powerful, who imitated the foreign customs, dress, and manners of the surrounding countries, abandoned their native manners, usages, and dress, just like the Germans of our time, who are apes of almost all nations. But this is a proof of a great frivolity and of an unstable disposition. *Magnisque negatum, stare din* (ii. 3). This prophet, beyond all others, urges humility. He knows well that only the lowly please God, and that, on the contrary, the proud, pompous, and hardened despisers displease him.

**STARKE:** Ver. 1. God bears with the ungodly for a time and does good to them by pious magistrates and preachers, in order that He may thereby lead them to repentance. — Ver. 2. To human eyes it certainly appears that war arises from this or that quarrel among men, but the Scripture teaches us that the exciting cause of all wars is the sin and guilt of the land, by which God is moved to vengeance. There is no calamity, which the Lord does not send (Am. iii. 6). — Ver. 4. God is bound to no place. When the wickedness of men increases in a city, He causes it to be laid waste, though the true religion has long borne sway in it. — Ver. 5. The announcement that God would extirpate idolaters, who wished to unite idolatry with the true worship of God, could powerfully strengthen the faithful in their struggle. The true worship of God suffers no idolatry by the side of it. It is quite possible, that those who have been once born again may lose their faith and fall from the grace of God. Seeking and asking suppose a salutary knowledge of God, by which his goodness and kindness are tasted. When we have tasted these the longing after God becomes always greater ; then we seek to know God always more and more truly. — Ver. 7. Ungodly people complain, when they are obliged to hear the divine threatenings on account of their sins, or to feel the hand of God, but pious people are still and bear the wrath of the Lord. — Ver. 9. He who brings unlawful possessions into his house, brings the divi-

curse with them.—Ver. 11. To ply trade is not wrong in itself; but God does not allow dishonesty in it to go unpunished.—Ver. 12. Those who are in the Church, and yet deny the divine omniscience, are worse than the heathen. Before destruction comes security. Wine is agitated and turbid, when it is poured out of one cask into another; but if it remains in one cask, it settles and produces tartar. So it is with hypocrites: they listen, to be sure, to the preaching of the prophets; but they do not allow themselves to be made uneasy thereby in their consciences, and become finally as hard as stone.—Ver. 14. God gives courage, and can take it away.—Ver. 17. That men err in counsel is a judgment of God.—Ver. 18. If the wrath of an earthly king is a messenger of death (Prov. xvi. 14; Esth. vii. 7), how much more the terrible wrath of Almighty God.—Chap. ii. ver. 1. Though no man can become entirely perfect in piety here, yet we must see to it that we do not stand still in godliness, much less go back, but always advance and become more perfect from day to day. God has power to hide his own in the day of wrath upon the ungodly.

PFAFF: Ver. 5. Those who swear by the Lord, and who say, "as sure as the Lord liveth," are not meant alone, but those also who have sworn obedience and fidelity to the Lord and yet practice idolatry and also wish to unite the true with the false worship of God.—Ver. 8. The foolish imitation of foreign dress and fashions is a sign of great vanity and of a damnable pride. This vanity also will be punished. To build houses, to plant vineyards, to use the possessions of this world, is entirely right. But then they become a snare to him who does not consecrate his work by means of sincere conversion to the Lord.—Ver. 16. What terror will the day of the last trumpet produce among men! Let then the voice of this trumpet sound now in our ears, in order that we may, while it is yet the time of grace, turn to the Lord.—Ver. 18. Ye rich, your silver and your gold cannot deliver you in the day of God's wrath. Seek them a possession which remains and endures forever.—Chap. ii. ver. 1. Nothing is more necessary and more useful for one who is desirous of his salvation, than self-examination. How much better is it that we judge ourselves before we are judged of the Lord.

RIEGER: From the whole representation of the prophet one sees with what great earnestness that which is recorded (2 Kings xxiii. 25 ff.), was spoken: Josiah turned himself with his whole heart, with his whole soul, with all his might, to the Lord; yet the Lord turned not from the fury of his wrath and said, I will remove Judah also out of my sight. The like may often happen in one (Amon's) reign that God will never cease until He has destroyed not only the ungodly, but also their offenses [that against which or by which a person meets with a fall—a stumbling-block, scandal. See Exeget., ver. 3—C. E.], not only the sinful customs introduced by them, but also the places and houses, which have become to others ways to hell. How accurately does God know what a wicked heart all outbreaks of sin have as their source, since they do not even fear God, do not esteem Him, do not ask after Him. And again, how does He examine not only the hearts and reins, but observe also what kind of dress men wear. What does God often draw forth from that which is concealed as soon as He begins to search with candles. How little consolation do even great possessions give in the day of such wrath.—Chap.

ii. ver. 1 ff. At first the prophet must certainly have discovered something good among the entire hostile people by which they might still enjoy a mitigation in the day of judgment. But when there was little or nothing to be discovered among them, he nevertheless addresses those in distress, who, under the prevailing unrighteousness, had to suffer more than pleasure from it, and he rouses them, that they may not fall asleep over the necessity of the time, but seek the Lord, who conceals himself at such a time, and that with all the consolation of a good conscience in righteousness, they should nevertheless, though doomed to every kind of sorrow, resign themselves to humility. Although every one in such common calamities is involved in much trouble, yet there are exceptions enough, if one is so concealed, as, e. g., in the destruction of Jerusalem, was the case with the prophet Jeremiah (xxxix. 11 f.), Baruch (lxv. 5), Ebedmelech (xxxix. 17 f.).

BURCK: On ver. 1. God, therefore, permitted the reign of the pious Josiah to precede the final doom of Judah, in order that all excuse might be taken from the Jews. They might have said, Our kings compelled us to this and to that. If so, the answer was now ready: Josiah did not compel you, rather, as far as he could, he sought to turn you; but ye continued obstinate.

THEODORET: Ver. 4. For as I (Jehovah) made fowls and fishes and cattle for the service of men, so will I destroy the former also with the latter. They are unnecessary where there are none to make use of them.

HIERON.: The dumb brutes also feel the wrath of God. When men and cities are destroyed, then one sees also that beasts, birds, etc., disappear. Of this Illyria, Thrace, and also Judæa bear testimony. I come from the last named country, and there everything except heaven and earth and increasing wilderness has perished.

SCHLIER: Ver. 4. Not much was gained by Josiah's reformation. Therefore the Lord himself will undertake a reformation.

THEREMIN: Ver. 7. God will first speak in the judgment. He will say, Ye had Moses and the prophets; ye had my words, which are light and life; why would ye not hear them? These reproaches will roll like thunder in the ears of the guilty. Then the thunders will be silent, and the judge will be silent, and a silence more terrible than the thunder will ensue,—the silence of the eternal decision.

ABARBANE: Ver. 11. Because the people have become like the Canaanites in sin, therefore, like them also shall they be driven out of Canaan.

SCHNIEDER: The prophet uses the name of a part of the city ("Mörser," mortar), in order to intimate that those who dwell there, are about to be brayed in this mortar.

HIERON.: Ver. 13. He will leave nothing unpunished. If we read the history of Josephus, it is there written, how the princes, priests, and nobles were drawn from cloacæ, lurking-places, pits, and ditches, where they had concealed themselves in fear of death.

KEIL: In the carnal repose of their earthly fortune they think in their hearts, that there is no God, who rules and judges the world, that everything takes place by chance, or according to inanimate laws of nature. They did not deny the existence of God, but they denied, in their disposition and conduct, the working of the living God in the world, they regarded Jehovah on a level with dead idols, which neither do good nor evil. Is. xli. 23

J. SCUMID: The prophet employs such an ac-

cumulation of almost synonymous words in order to intimate on the one hand the certainty of the thing, and on the other to inspire the Jews with fear, and to deprive them of all excuse, that they have not been sufficiently warned, and that with suitable warning they would have sought the reconciliation of God.

STRAUSS : Ver. 16. The sacrifice of joy (Ps. xxvii. 6),<sup>1</sup> which the ungrateful people did not wish to bring, God himself now prepares. The power of the trumpet's sound continues irresistible; once it captured the cities of Judah, now it destroys them who were once captors.

COCCEIUS : Chap. ii. ver. 3. To seek God, *i. e.*, to direct every wish, thought, and effort to this end, that one may know where He is and how holy He is, and what are his ways, in order that thou mayest exalt Him, and fleeing to Him enjoy Him as thy own. To seek righteousness, *i. e.*, to wish to possess that condition, by which man is an heir of the kingdom of heaven, — a condition which man does not have of himself. (Hab. ii. 4.) To seek humility, *i. e.*, to seek that condition of soul, by which man renounces himself and his righteousness, trusts in God, and cheerfully forgives his neighbor for God's sake.

## REASONS.

## CHAP. II. 4 – III. 7.

- Ver. 4** For Gaza shall be forsaken,  
And Ashkelon shall become a desolation,  
Ashdod, they shall drive her out at noon-day,<sup>1</sup>  
And Ekron shall be rooted out.
- 5** Woe to the inhabitants of the sea-coast!<sup>2</sup>  
The nation of the Cherithim!<sup>3</sup>  
The word of Jehovah is against you,  
O Canaan, land of the Philistines!  
I will destroy thee, that there shall be no inhabitant.
- 6** And the sea-coast<sup>2</sup> shall become places for pasture,  
And folds for flocks.
- 7** And the coast<sup>2</sup> shall be for the remnant of the house of Judah ;  
Upon them will they feed ;  
In the houses of Ashkelon shall they lie down in the evening,  
For Jehovah, their God, will visit them,  
And turn their captivity.
- 8** I have heard the reproach of Moab,  
And the revilings of the sons of Ammon,  
Who [wherewith they] have reviled my people,  
And acted insolently against their boundary.
- 9** Therefore as I live, saith Jehovah of hosts,  
The God of Israel :  
Surely Moab shall become like Sodom,  
And the sons of Ammon like Gomorrah,  
A possession of nettles and salt-pits,<sup>4</sup>  
And a desolation forever.  
The remnant of my people shall plunder them,  
And the residue of my nation shall possess them.
- 10** This shall be to them for their pride,  
Because they have reviled and carried themselves haughtily  
Against the people of Jehovah of hosts.

<sup>1</sup> [The allusion to Ps. xxvii. 6 is better understood by the marginal reading, "sacrifices of shouting." The Heb. word rendered "shouting" in Ps. xxvii. 6 is the same word employed by the prophet, i. 16, and rendered "alarm." In Lev. xxv. 9 the same word signifies the sound of a trumpet Hence the pertinence of the allusion to Ps. xxvii. 6 by Strauss. — C. E.]

- 11 Terrible is Jehovah against them,  
For He destroys all the gods of the earth ;  
And all the islands of the nations,  
Each from his place, shall worship Him.
- 12 Also ye Cushites,<sup>5</sup>  
Slain of my sword are they.
- 13 And He will stretch forth his hand over the north  
And destroy Assyria ;  
And He will make Nineveh a waste,  
A dry place like the desert.
- 14 And flocks shall lie down in the midst of her ,  
All the wild beasts <sup>6</sup> of the nations ;  
Both the pelican and the hedge-hog  
Shall lodge on her capitals ;  
The voice of the singer in the window :  
Desolation upon the threshold,  
For the cedar-work He has made bare.
- 15 This is the exulting city, which dwelt securely,  
Which said in her heart, I am, and there is none besides me,  
How has she become a desolation,  
A lair for beasts !  
Every one that passes by her will hiss,  
He will shake his hand.

## CHAPTER III.

- 1 Woe to the rebellious and polluted,<sup>7</sup>  
The oppressive city !
- 2 She listened not to the voice :  
She did not accept discipline :  
She did not trust in Jehovah :  
She did not draw near to her God.
- 3 Her princes in the midst of her  
Are roaring lions :  
Her judges are evening wolves ;  
They reserve <sup>8</sup> nothing for the morning.
- 4 Her prophets are vain-glorious,  
Men of treacheries :  
Her priests profane what is holy ;  
They do violence to the law.
- 5 The righteous Jehovah is in the midst of her ;  
He will not do wickedness ;  
Every morning He will bring his judgment to light ,  
It does not fail ;  
But the unrighteous man does not know shame.
- 6 I have cut off nations :  
Their battlements are laid waste ;  
I have made their streets desolate,  
So that no one passes over [them] ;  
Their cities are destroyed.

So that there is no man [there],  
So that there is no inhabitant.

7 I said: Only do thou fear me,  
Do thou receive correction,  
And her dwelling shall not be cut off,  
According to all that I have appointed concerning her;  
But they rose up early;  
They corrupted all their doings.

## TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1] Ver. 4. — צְדִירִים is dual, and signifies *double light*, i. e., strongest, brightest, Gen. xlvi. 16, 25, Deut. xxviii. 29. Jer. vi. 4.

[2] Ver. 5. — חֶבֶל, a *cord, rope*, Josh. ii. 15; Ecc. xii. 6; a measuring line, 2 Sam. viii. 2; Am. vii. 17; a portion measured out, as of land, and assigned to any one by lot, Josh. xvii. 14; xix. 9; hence, it signifies portion, possession, inheritance, tract, district, region.

[3] Ver. 5. — גָּנוֹי כְּרֵתִים: LXX.: πάρουκοι Κρητῶν; Vulg.: gens perditionis. They inhabited southern Philistia, 1 Sam. xxx. 14; Ez. xxv. 16. See Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, articles "Cherethims," "Cherethites," and "Captor."

[4] Ver. 9. — בְּקַרְבָּן. This word is nowhere else used in the Bible. See a copy of "the Moabite Stone," in *The Jewish Times*, Friday, June 10, 1870, in which the plural of the same word, ver. 25, is rendered "ditches." See also Le normant and Chevallier, vol. ii. p. 211, note.

[5] Ver. 12. — See Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, article "Cush;" Kitto's *Cyclopædia of Bib. Lit.*, and Lenormant and Chevallier's *Ancient History of the East*, vol. i. p. 57 ff.

[6] Ver. 14. — כָּל־חַיְרָיוֹנִים: LXX., πάντα τὰ θηρία τῆς γῆς; Vulg., Omnes bestiae gentium; Kleinert, alles heid nische Gethier; Keil, "all kinds of animals in crowds or in a mass."

[7] CHAP. III. Ver. 1. — נְגַלְּהַה, Niph'al of נְגַלְּה, to be defiled, polluted, unclean; used in this sense only in the later Hebrew. See Is. lix. 3; lxiii. 3; Lam. iv. 14; Mal. i. 7; Ezra ii. 62; Neh. vii. 64; Dan. i. 8.

[8] Ver. 8. — בְּרָמָה, from בָּרַם, to cut off or arayo; Piel, to gnaw, crush, craunch bones; LXX.: οὐχ ὑπελείποντο εἰς τὸ τραύμα; Vulg.: non relinquebant in mane; Luther: die nichts lassen bis auf den Morgen überbleiben. — C. E.]

## EXEGETICAL.

The reason for the announcement of the judgment made in chap. i. (comp. Introd. 3):—

1. God brings the judgment upon all the heathen, ii. 4-15.

2. And yet Jerusalem remains incorrigible, iii. 1-7.

Chap. ii. vers. 4-15. *The Judgment upon the Heathen.* Representative nations from the four cardinal points, West, East, North, and South, are mentioned, so that by the completeness of the quaternary number of the four quarters of heaven arises the idea of the universal judgment upon the heathen nations (comp. ver. 11 and the Judgment of the four winds, Jer. xlvi. 36; Zech. ii. 6; vi. 5).

The description is divided into three parallel strophes of four verses each:—

(a) Judgment upon Philistia, vers. 4-7.

(b) Judgment upon Moab and Ammon, vers. 8-11.

(c) Judgment upon Ethiopia and Assyria, vers. 12-15.

Vers. 4-7. The judgment upon Philistia, the land of the West. For — thus the prophet immediately joins argument to the exhortation, which, in its final clause, directs [us] to the certainty of the judgment — Gaza shall be forsaken.

עֲזָתָה and עֲזָקָה form a paronomasia, like Ekron and הַעֲדָה, at the close of the verse (comp. Micah i. 10 ff.). And Ashkelon shall become a desolation. Ashdod (the seat of the worship of Dagon (1 Sam. vi.) they, (undefined enemies) will drive out at noon-day: so defenseless will it be against the sudden and powerful attack, that there is not even need of a surprise by night. Compare Jer.

xv. 8, where also a word of similar sound, שׂודָה, occurs, which forms also an unexpressed paronomasia of thought to אַשְׁדָּה; and Ekron is ploughed up. Even the enumeration of cities is governed by the symbolical number four, so that of the five cities of the Philistines (Jos. xiii. 3), one, Gath, is omitted, according to the example of Am. i. 7 f.

Ver. 5. The prophet directly addresses those who are threatened: Woe to you who inhabit the sea-coast, חַבֵּל הַיּוֹם, a name of the country of the Philistines (see Deut. iii. 4), ye Cretans. The connection of the Philistines with the island of Crete was known from very ancient times (1 Sam. xxx. 14 ff.; comp. Tac., *Hist.*, v. 2), although the arguments adduced by Bertheau (*Gesch. der Israeliten*, p. 188 ff. [*History of the Israelites*, etc.]) to identify Capthor, the native country of the Philistines, who were not originally settled in Canaan, but immigrated into it at a later period, (Am. ix. 7), with Crete, are not sufficient. [Philistine means emigrant: in the LXX., they are called Ἀλλόθυλοι. For an account of their origin see Smith's *Dict. of the Bible*, s. v. "Philistines." Compare Rawlinson's *Herodotus*, vol. iv. p. 64, note 4, and Lenormant and Chevallier, vol. i. p. 124. — C. E.] Capthor seems rather to be designated, Gen. x. 13 f., as an Egyptian district. Compare Starck, *Gaza*, p. 66 ff.; 99 ff.; Duncker, *Gesch. des A. I.*, p. 339 A. Hence also the name Cretim is to be derived from Crete. To derive it from בְּרָמָה, to destroy, and to designate the Philistines by it, as those who are to be destroyed, as Keil, following the Targum and the Vulgate, does, is unnatural. The play upon words, which the

prophet possibly had in mind (comp. iii. 6; also the expression בָּרֶת immediately following this verse, and the plays upon words, ver. 4) is far from etymology. The word of Jehovah is against thee, Canaan, properly "low country," originally the name of the whole tract of land on the Mediterranean, inhabited on the North by the Phoenicians and on the South by the Philistines (Num. xiii. 30 (29?)); Thou land of the Philistines. And I will destroy thee, that there shall be no inhabitant. נַחַת is, as is frequently the case, equivalent to שׁוֹתֵה מִנְחָתֵה.

Ver. 6. And there shall be [it will not do to construe, with the interpreters, the verb חִירָתָה with חַבֵּל, for this is masculine: it can only be construed with נָתָה (comp. Micah i. 9; Ges. 146, 3), so that חַבֵּל הַיִם is to be understood as acc. loci] in the district upon the sea-coast extensive places for pastures and sheep-folds. Some take בָּרֶת as the plural of בָּרֶת, which (from the root כְּרַח, to dig) would signify, according to Kimchi, the ditch made round a fold; according to Cölln, a cistern; both of which interpretations are untenable. Others (Strauss, Keil), following Bochart, take it for the infinitive of בָּרֶת; and understand by נָתָה בָּרֶת pastures of shepherds' caves, i. e., where shepherds dig caves for a protection against the sun. Yet the expression, aside from the superfluity of the required complement, is little adapted to characterize the activity of the shepherds only. It is best to consider, with Hitzig, the word as a plural from בָּרֶת, pasture.

The apparent tautology with נָתָה, is no argument against it, since בָּוֹת, [plural of נָתָה; see Ges., s. v.—C. E.], dwelling, pasture [for flocks and herds—C. E.] is a more comprehensive idea than בָּרֶת, a pasture for lambs [such is the strict meaning of the Heb. word בָּרֶת: Kleinert renders it Viehweide—C. E.]; and since moreover גִּירְזָת צָאן and בָּרֶת רַעִים form two pairs of words closely belonging together, both of which are subordinate to נָתָה. The abnormal form [the regular form is בָּרֶת] [the plural of בָּרֶת, wherever it occurs, is בָּרִים.—C. E.] is occasioned by the preceding נָתָה, and likewise perhaps by playing upon the word בָּרֶת. It cannot be by accident that shepherds and their flocks are mentioned here instead of destroyers, whilst in threatening prophecies in other places, destruction is announced by this form of threatening, viz., that the city or territory is delivered up to beasts of the wilderness, monsters, ponds of water, or to desert vegetation. The resemblance of the turn of thought to Jer. vi. 3 (comp. Introd. 4) is remarkable, and it is natural to suppose that as Jeremiah has there, so Zephaniah has here his eyes fixed upon the distress caused by the hordes of Scythians, whose march through the land of the Philistines, appeared also to Herodotus to be sufficiently noteworthy to obtain mention in his history (i. 104). They set out, the men and frequently also the women, on horseback: they took

with them wagons yoked with oxen, which, furnished with a felt covering, served, at the same time, for tent and house; also their property, which consisted of droves of horses, cattle, and sheep, from whose wool they prepared those coverings. (Herod., iv. 2, 61, 75, 114, 122.) At a later period, when there shall be only a remnant of Judah left, another event will follow the first punishment of Philistia: —

Ver. 7. Then the sea-coast shall fall to the lot of the remnant of Israel [Judah is the reading in the Hebrew text—C. E.], they will feed upon them (עֲלֵיכֶם) is construed with בָּרֶת ver. 6, as if it were written there (כִּי) and in the houses—which have become empty—of Ashkelon will they lie down in the evening. A reproduction [of the idea] of Ob. 19. The connection of thought (vers. 6, 7) would accordingly present itself thus: first Philistia is laid waste by a pastoral nation. Then Judah is judged, compare 7 c; and then the remnant of Judah inherits Philistia as pasture-ground. Hitzig also [interprets it] in a similar way. However the reference to the Scythians is not at all necessary. Quite as good and perhaps a still simpler understanding of the passage results, if we, as indicated in the translation, render prominent in נָתָה the idea of an open, empty place, so that in ver. 6 the destroyers, the shepherds that obtain possession, do not form the prominent idea so much as the emptiness, which resulted from a catastrophe left undefined. The district on the sea-coast, hitherto covered with cities rich in commerce, becomes open grounds for pastures, etc. And these open grounds, after Israel is purified, become the possession of the remnant. Thus יְרוּשָׁה (ver. 7) naturally connects with רַעִים (ver. 6).

The following reason: for Jehovah, their God, will certainly visit them, Israel, and, whilst the wound of the heathen is incurable (Nah. iii. 19), he will turn their captivity, is consistent with both constructions: it shows how the restoration of the place is effected. פְּנָזֶר is to be understood in this passage of the gracious visitation of those already chastised (Strauss and others), on account of its close parallelism with שָׁבֵב שָׁבָות: it is, however, contrary to the prevailing usage of the book. Concerning the turning of the captivity, the restoration of the captives, comp. Deut. xxx. 3; on Nah. ii. 3, and below iii. 20.

[Keil: "Paqad, to visit in a good sense, i. e., to take them under his care, as is almost always the meaning when it is construed with an accusative of the person. It is only in Ps.lix. 6, that it is used with an acc. pers. instead of with על, in the sense of to chastise or punish. שָׁבֵב שָׁבָות as in Hos. vi. 11 and Amos ix. 14. The Keri, שָׁבֵב שָׁבָות, has arisen from a misinterpretation."—C. E.]

Vers. 8-10. *The Judgment upon the East: Moab and Ammon, the sons of Lot.* Comp. Is. xvi. 6 xxv. 11; Jer. xlvi. 29 ff. If the subject here were historical, and not rather the universal and ideal character of the judgment of the world, then the interjacent, hereditary enemy, Edom, would certainly not have been omitted. I have heard the abuse (חרפה) sensu activo, as in Lam. iii. 61) of Moab, who from of old armed evil tongue,

against me and my people (Num. iv. 22 ff.), and the revilings of the sons of Ammon, whose old hatred continued even to the latest times (Neh. iv. 3, 7); wherewith they have reviled my people and haughtily violated, literally, acted insolently against their boundary. Comp. Am. i. 13; 2 Kings xiii. 20; Jer. xl. The suffix in **בְּגִיאָם** is to be referred to **עַפְרֵי** (comp. ver. 10, ver. 9).

Ver. 9. Therefore as I live — *Ἐπεὶ καὶ οὐδὲνδε εἰχεὶ μεῖζον δύματι ὕποστε καὶ έαυτοῦ* (Heb. vi. 13; for the construction compare Ew., 329 a) — saith Jehovah of hosts (comp. on Nah. ii. 14 [13]) the God of Israel: Moab shall become as Sodom and Ammon as Gomorrah, — they will incur a destruction like that of the cities, in whose fate their ancestor, Lot, was involved — an inheritance of nettles and salt-pits (see note on ver. 9 — C. E.), like the Dead Sea, on which they dwell, and desert forever. The remnant of my people shall plunder them and the residue of my nation (**עַמִּי** instead of **עַמִּים**, comp. Olsh., 39 d; 164 d) shall inherit them. If the details of a special historical prophecy were treated of, then Hitzig would be right in objecting, that the plundering and seizure by the returned remnant of Israel must take place before the final destinies of these countries, that the desolated land is not suitable for a **נְצָרָבָן**, etc. But the prophet does not think of individual chronologically arranged dates, but of the grouping together of everything that involves the execution of Jehovah's judgment upon the heathen nations; and this certainly has for its chief moment the destruction of the sinners and the redemption of his people.

Ver. 10. This shall be to them for their pride, because they have despised and boasted against the people of Jehovah of hosts. The judgment is talio. The universality of it stands out with still greater precision, according to its two-fold fundamental characteristic.

Ver. 11. Jehovah will be terrible against them (comp. Deut. vii. 21), for He will destroy all the gods of the earth, so that, after they have brought their peoples to ruin and judgment, they must themselves now pass away and die like men (Ps. lxxxii. 7). Compare below, the Doctrinal and Ethical part.

And they will worship Him, after that the hostile powers over them have passed away, every one from his place, all the islands of the nations. It is the common teaching of prophecy, that all islands, all nations the most remote, shall turn to Jehovah. But it generally takes the form, that they [the nations] shall flow to Jerusalem (Is. ii.; Micah iv.). Now it is certainly undeniable that in the idea of this Jerusalem [of the time] of the consummation, the spiritual element predominates (comp. on Micah iv. 1 ff.). But that in this pre-exile prophet the local covering should already be so removed, as e. g. in Mal. i. 11, that he should consider a worship of Jehovah in all places the fulfillment of the times, is, although it commends itself at the first view of this passage, nevertheless very doubtful, the more so as Zephaniah himself (iii. 10) adheres to the older form of representation, namely, the offering of the heathen at the Holy City [Jerusalem — C. E.]. Hence I believe that the words: *they will worship each from his place*, are used in a pregnant sense: they will pour to Him worshipping; compare the trembling hither (Micah vii. 17; Hos. iii. 5).

[Keil: " *Mimmo komo*, coming from his place the meaning is not that the nations will worship Jehovah at their own place, in their own lands, in contradistinction to Mic. iv. 1; Zech. xiv. 16, and other passages, where the nations go on pilgrimages to Mount Zion (Hitzig); but their going to Jerusalem is implied in the *in min* (from), though it is not brought prominently out, as being unessential to the thought." — C. E.]

Vers. 12-15. *The Judgment upon Ethiopia and Assyria, South and North.* It is in keeping with the great perspective, which is opened in ver. 11, that distant nations should be introduced for illustration. The retrospect to Nah. iii. 8 ff. is apparent. Ye Cushites also, Ethiopians, slain of my sword are ye; literally "are they." The transition from the second to the third person has in itself nothing unusual (comp. iii. 7 and the whole of Nahum).

Calvin connects with it the ingenious remark: "*In secunda persona initio versus propheta compellit ad tribunal Dei, postea in tertia adjungit: erunt*" etc., in a certain manner the sentence of the judge. Yet the predicative position of the **הַצְפָּן** is so remarkable, that Ewald and Hitzig (against Rückert, Strauss, Keil) are certainly right in considering it as a substitute for the copula. Comp. Is xxxvii. 16.

[Keil says: " **הַצְפָּן** does not take the place of the copula between the subject and predicate any more than **אֶת** in Is. xxxvii. 16 and Ezra v. 11 (to which Hitzig appeals in support of this usage: see Delitzsch, on the other hand, in his *Comm. on Isaiah*, l. c.), but is a predicate." — C. E.]

Ver. 13. And He will stretch out his hand (comp. i. 4) over the North and destroy Assyria, and make Nineveh a barren waste, dry like the desert, whilst at this very time [that the prophet was speaking — C. E.] the streams of water and the abundant irrigation are the pride and joy of the powerful city (comp. pp. 101, 104).

[Keil: "The prophet dwells longer upon the heathen power of the north, the Assyrian kingdom with its capital Nineveh, because Assyria was then the imperial power, which was seeking to destroy the kingdom of God in Judah. This explains the fact that the prophet expresses the announcement of the destruction of this power in the form of a wish, as the use of the contracted forms *yet* and *yāsēm* clearly shows. For it is evident that Ewald is wrong in supposing that **צְפָן** stands for **צְפָן**, or should be so pointed, inasmuch as the historical tense, "there He stretched out his hand," would be perfectly out of place. **צְפָן** (to stretch out a hand), as in ch. i. 4: *'Al tāsphōn*, over (or against) the North. The reference is to Assyria with the capital Nineveh. It is true that this kingdom was not to the north, but to the northeast, of Judah; but inasmuch as the Assyrian armies invaded Palestine from the north, it is regarded by the prophets as situated in the north. On Nineveh itself, see at Jonah i. 2 (vol. 1, p. 390); and on the destruction of this city and the fall of the Assyrian empire, at Nah. iii. 19 (p. 42)." — C. E.]

Ver. 14. And herds shall lie down in the midst of it [viz., of the city, which has become a desert — C. E.], but certainly not herds of cattle, which have no nourishment in the desert, but every kind of heathen beasts. **צְבָרָה** is not

with the suffix of the third person, and is accordingly not to be translated, and all his beasts, the heathen : this form is בְּנֵי־יְהוָה (Job xxxiii. 20) ; but it is the known archaic form of the status constr. from בְּנֵי־הָאָדָם (Gen. i. 24; Ges., 90, 3, 6). בְּנֵי is accordingl. the stat. abs. By the beasts of the heathen it is most natural to understand either (according to 2 Sam. xxiii. 13; Ps. lxviii. 31 [comp. the Heb. text — C. E.]) the conquering world-powers, which take possession of Nineveh as the renuant of Israel take possession of the ruined kingdoms of the Philistines and Ammonites (vers. 7, 9) ; or the roving hordes of Scythians. However the interpretation of Cölln, Rosenm., De W., Strauss, and Keil is not to be characterized positively as erroneous : [they interpret it] every (real) beast, that is accustomed to range in herds (בְּנֵי) ; compare the *goi* of the locusts, Joel i. 6.

[Keil : "The meaning can only be, 'all kinds of animals in crowds or in a mass.' בְּנֵי is used here for the mass of animals, just as it is in Joel i. 6 for the multitude of locusts, and as בְּנֵי is in Prov. xxx. 35, 36, for the ant-people ; and the genitive is to be taken as in apposition. Every other explanation is exposed to much greater objections and difficulties. For the form בְּנֵי־יְהוָה, see at Gen. i. 24." — C. E.]

Pelicans also [see Thomson's *The Land and the Book*, vol. i. p. 403 — C. E.] and hedge-hogs — the inhabitants of deserted countries and ruined places — will lodge on their capitals. The association of ideas leads the prophet to reminiscences from Is. xxxiv. 11 ; xiv. 23 ; compare the first clause [of the verse] with Is. xiii. 21. "The capitals of the pillars do not lie on the ground, but now stand unattached, after the palaces, roofs, and floors, which rested upon them, are thrown down," Hitzig. Hark, how it sings, — the nesting bird, — in the window.

לֹא־, as in i. 14, Nah. iii. 2, literally vox (*eius qui*) canit, or auditur (*is qui*) canit. Desolation on the threshold ! None passes over it any more. For the cedar-paneelling, the beautiful ornament of the walls (comp. on Hab. ii. 17) He, Jehovah, has torn down [Heb. has made bare — C. E.]. אֲרַזָּה is related to אֲרַזִּים, as בְּנֵי־בָּנָה is to בְּנֵי, it conveys a collective idea (Ew., sec. 179 c.).

[Keil : "The sketching of the picture of the destruction passes from the general appearance of the city to the separate ruins, coming down from the lofty knobs of the pillars to the windows, and from these to the thresholds of the ruins of the houses." — C. E.]

Ver. 15. This is the city, the exulting one (Is. xxiii. 7), which dwelt so securely, sheltered behind her defenses of water; the expression is taken from Judges xviii. 7. "Vox ut exultantis super illam." Remigius. Which said in her heart : I am and besides me none ; literally, and besides me (none) further. "Before 'besides,' the negation, if the supposition is intimated by the proposition, or in it, can be omitted, and the words for 'besides' can hence signify also 'only,' comp. Micah vi. 8." Hitzig. [? — Micah vi. 8, however, is a different case ; compare on the passage. And I would prefer, though against the consensus interpretum, to explain it : I, and if I am no more, still I ; and always I. The sense is the

same in both views.] The same expression, with the same signification, is applied to Babylon, Is. xlvi. 8, 10.

[Keil : The *Yod* in *aphsi* is not paragogical, but a prounoun in the first person ; at the same time, 'éphes is not a preposition, "beside me," since in that case the negation "not one" could not be omitted, but the "non-existence," so that אָמַרְתִּי אֲפָסֵי, "I am absolutely no further (see at Is. xlvi. 8)." See Ges., *Thesaurus*, s. v. — C. E.] How has she become a desolation ! (applied to Babylon, Jer. 1. 23) a lair of beasts ! Every one that passes by her, hisses, waves his hand. The thought is from Nah. iii. 19. The waving of the hands, like the clapping, Nah. iii. 19, is a sign of gratified feeling (comp. Ps. xlii. 2 ; Is. iv. 12). The expression is, in part, similar to Jer. xix. 8. [See Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, vol. i. p. 245. — C. E.]

### CHAPTER III.

Vers. 1-7 *The Obduracy of Jerusalem.* Woe to the refractory מִוְרָאָה, part. from the root מְרַאָה, the hiphil of which occurs Job xxxix. 18, and in the Cod. Sam. Lev. xiii. 51, 52 ; xiv. 44 ; equivalent to מְרַאָה ; compare נִצְחָה, Eccles. x. 5, contracted from נִצְחָה, equivalent to נִצְחָה, and polluted, the oppressive city ! יְוָהָה is the part of מִבְּנָה, press it, Jer. 1. 16 and above. The prophet gives four reasons for this sharp address.

Ver. 2. She hearkens not to the voice, with which the faithful God speaks to her, ver. 7, in all these acts (ii. 4 ff.). The ב denotes a hearing with pleasure and effect : she hearkens not, although she hears. She does not accept discipline.

מְוֹסֵר, the lesson which is derived from the experience of one's own or another's suffering [Schadens, damage, harm — C. E.], and generally from attention to the ways of God ; compare Prov. i. 2. She trusts not in Jehovah, but in her wealth (i. 12) : to her God she does not draw near, but to the Baals (i. 6) : the acts of God and the voice of the prophets die away unheard ; no change is effected.

Ver. 3. Her princes, in the midst of her, (comp. on i. 8) are roaring lions (for the idea comp. Micah iii. 3 ; for the expression, Prov. xxviii. 15 ; Sir. xiii. 19). Her judges are evening wolves, which go out in the evening for prey and are very ravenous ("non quod reliquo tempore quiescerent," Calv. on Ps. lxx. 7), which leave nothing for the morning, but so eager are they that they instantly devour the victim that falls into their clutches. "Ubi latrocinium in ipso foro exercetur, quid jam de tota urbe dicendum erit ?" Calv.

Ver. 4. Her prophets are knaves, פְּלִזְעִים, people, who utter פְּתִיחָה, i. e., vain, empty talk, brag (comp. Jer. xxiii. 32), men of treachery, who defraud God (Hos. vi. 7) and men, since they pretend that their own word is the word of God (Ez. xxii. 28 ; comp. Micah ii. 11 ff.). Her priests desecrate that which is holy, the temple, with their sacrilege, comp. Jer. xxiii. 11 (Hieron.), the sacrifices (comp. שְׁמָרָה, Jer. ii. 3) by the neglect of the prescribed ritual, Ez. xxii. 26, comp. Mal. i. 11 (Cölln) : in short, they make everything sa-

red common (Hitzig), instead of strictly discriminating, according to Lev. x. 10 ff., between the holy and profane. Thus they do violence to the law, of which they ought to be the guardians. There is a corruption of all classes, of the organism of the kingdom in its substance, almost still worse than Micah had pictured it, chap. iii. And the cause of this disorder does not lie with God (vers. 5-7). He has left nothing untried.

Jehovah is righteous, as a righteous one (comp. for the constr. Hos. xi. 9) in the midst of her, He does no wrong. Comp. Deut. xxxii. 4.) Morning by morning (comp. Ex. xvi. 13) He sets his justice in the light (comp. Hos. vi. 5). God's justice is neither his teaching ("docendo populum leges et jura sua per prophetas, qui hortando et monendo per singulos dies id operam dant, ut eum ad meliorem frugem vocent" (Rosenm., Keil)), nor his righteous administration (Chald., Hieron., Cyr., Strauss, Hitzig), but the announcement of the judgment, which it was right for Him and obligatory upon Him to bring upon these mad practices (comp. Calvin, above, p. 17): the sentences of the predicted judgment (comp. xv. and Micah iii. 8), which, on the one hand, are declared against the heathen, but principally against Israel. He declares them, literally, *without failing*: He does not miss, returning faithfully every morning. The wicked have their work in the evening and leave nothing for the morning (ver. 3), Jehovah has it in the morning and has each day a clear announcement. But in vain; the wicked [person] knows no shame (comp. ii. 1): neither the example of the righteous government of God, nor the merited threatening of coming judgments causes him to blush. Jehovah himself is introduced as speaking (ver. 6); He sets forth his great deeds, which He had accomplished for and before the eyes of Israel: I have destroyed nations, those mentioned chap. ii. and many others; their battlements are laid waste, synecdochically for the walls and fortresses, which they crown. I have desolated their streets, literally made dry, since the multitude of men crowding them is considered as a flood (comp. Hab. iii. 15), so that no one any more passes through them. מִבְּלַי with the part. like the bare מִן in other places or the pleonastic מִן, ii. 5, in the sense of necessary negative result (Ew., 323 a). The same turn [of thought] occurs Is. xxxiv. 10. [In the passage cited מִנּוּ is used. — C. E.] Their cities are laid waste, literally, fallen by ambuscade (מִלְחָמָה, Ex. xxi. 13; comp. Josh. 8), without people, without inhabitant. And why all this? For a warning example, that his people may consider his severity and his goodness.

Ver. 7. I said, — thought in me and spoke to them by these deeds, — only wouldest thou fear me, the imperf. instead of the imperative, in order to show the kindness and tenderness of the warning; only wouldest thou receive correction, suffer thyself to be taught. Then their (change from the second to the third person, as in Micah iii. 2 ff.: a mental speaking and meditating on the part of God in a certain manner, is indicated) house, i. e., not merely the temple (Strauss), but their possession and dwelling-place, the place Zion (comp. Matth. xxiii. 38) would not have been destroyed. To the substantive idea of destruction in this clause the following forms an apposition. destruction should not fall upon them, according to all that I have appointed concerning

them; the whole sum of the evils included in the destruction, the daily announced מִשְׁפָט פֶּקַד cannot have the common meaning, to charge, to command (so still Strauss, for in this sense the subjoined לְ designates, according to the usage of the language, not the object, concerning which a command is given, but him upon whom the charge is enjoined. But as it can signify the divine care for any one, so it signifies also the laying up of a debt against any one, so that it hangs, in a certain manner, over his head, in order to fall at last upon him or his descendants and to destroy them; like בְּטַר, Nah. i. 2. So also Ex. xx. 5; Hos. i. 4. Thus God would have his deeds considered by Israel, but what avail is it? But now — נִכְנָא after אֲנֹתְרִתִּי points out the contrast of the empirical reality to the fruitless or mistaken thoughts of the speaker; just as in Ps. xxxi. 23 (22); Is. xl ix. 4, — they only speed the more all their infamous deeds, literally, they are in haste to pervert all their doings. The verb חָשְׁרִתָּה (Ps. xiv. 2), takes the auxiliary verb הַשְׁׁבִים (for the construction, comp. Ew., 285 b), which brings into the sentence the emphasis of the contrast required by נִכְנָא: not only that they do not refrain from acting infamously, they even hasten to do so.

So it is evident that the judgment denounced, chap. i., is just, since all the judgments which befell the heathen in favor of Israel (Nah. ii. 1) produced no effect upon the people. So firmly convinced is the prophet of the incorrigibility of the people, that he, without farther ado, as if it were a question of the present, presupposes and declares it: even after the judgments described, chap. ii. 4 ff., which in his day were yet future (הַיּוּן, ii. 4, etc.), Jerusalem shall wear just such an appearance, and, before that time, a worse than at present.

[Keil: "In vers. 7 and 8 the prophet sums up all that he has said in vers. 1-6, to close his admonition to repentance with the announcement of judgment." — C. E.]

#### DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

The contest of Jehovah of hosts (ii. 9, comp. Com. on Nahum, p. 36) against the heathen, has a four-fold design. First, it involves — which is the final point of view on this side — the restoration of the kingdom of David (comp. Ps. ix.), whose extension, according to prophetic vision, is measured by the promise to Abraham. But in this respect only the countries which took possession of portions of this kingdom, viz., Philistia, Moab, Ammon, representative of the neighboring nations, come into consideration. Of Cush and Nineveh it is not said that the remnant of Israel will take their lands into possession. The second, and much higher point of view, is that of contest between God and the [false] gods, which represent the antagonism to the true God among the heathen (comp. ver. 11 a), The fundamental view of the O. T. concerning idols [*Götter*, false gods], is that they are nothing [*nichtse*, nothing], בְּלֹא־לֵא (Lev. xix. 4), and that the God of Israel, as He alone made the world (Ex. xx. 11; xxxi. 17), is the only true God, not merely among his own people and in his

own land, but also in the land of the heathen (Ex. x. 22 f.); another proof of which is furnished in the bestowal of Canaan [upon Israel] notwithstanding the prevailing idolatry. Denteronomy formally repeats this doctrine of the oneness of the God of Israel (vi. 4; xxxii. 39), and the idols are expressly designated as not-gods (Deut. xxxii. 21; comp. viii. 19). Besides this another representation is presented to view in the further development of the Old Testament revelation, which seems to ascribe to the idols an actual existence. In the Pentateuch the passages directly bearing upon this point have no weight. Either they seem to be spoken from a heathen standpoint, consequently they are without the sphere of revelation (comp. Ex. xviii. 11; Gen. xiv. 20; Num. xxiv. 16; comp. also Is. xxxvi. 18 ff.; xiv. 14); or idolatry appears as the worship of the objects of nature, temporarily permitted by God, which objects of nature are themselves subject to the power of God (Deut. iv. 19). There is, however, here, no doubt, a germinant intimation of the opposition existing between God and idols in the contest of Jehovah with the Egyptian magicians, who by virtue of their gods imitated his miracles. And undeniably the idea of a certain reality on the part of the gods seems to be expressed in the eighty-second Psalm. There God judges among the gods (comp. Ex. xii. 12). Because they executed their office unjustly and suffered their worshippers to sink into iniquity, they were to perish like men (ver. 7), and Jehovah would enter upon his inheritance, which they had governed for a time (ver. 8). Ps. xvii. 9 teaches the same thing; and the passage, ii. 11, receives hence a clear illustration. A twofold explanation of this phenomenon is possible. *Either* that the gods have a (subjective) subsistence by virtue of their worshippers, as a spiritual power, which unites and moves these worshippers in their appointed worship; which power consequently stands or falls with the existence of the people. So old Tarnov seems to understand the matter, when he explains the destruction of the gods at the place mentioned: "*Paulatim ac sensim perdit idola, adimendo ipsis cultores omniaque sacrificia abolendo.*" Compare below also, Bucer in the Homiletical suggestions. *Or*, that we trace back idolatry to satanic influences. "This satanic influence, after it has obtained a place within the soil of humanity, so insinuates itself into all the forms of development of the divine revelation and education as to produce a perverted counterpart of them, in which the substance of truth is destroyed and falsehood makes its abode; for in the common revelation the false god confronts the pure idea of God, in which [false god] not only, as in an idol the substance of divine truth is destroyed, but also, as in a positive phantom, the spiritual power of the evil one present and communicates itself." Beck. "Among the heathen, active, objective, devilish powers acquire divine honor by a darkening of the human conscience." Kling. This latter view of the matter is prominent in Paul, 1 Cor. x. 20. It is evident, too, that the Old Testament passages, and especially the one in question [chap. ii. 11 a — C. E.] coincide more nearly with this view than with the first [*i. e.*, with Kling's rather than with Beck's — C. E.]; only that the solidaric connection of the [false] gods with the kingdom of Satan and of the demons is not expressly accomplished in conformity with the Old Testament standpoint. The doctrine is this: that, while, according to the general view of prophecy, the idols are to be

despised as dead and dumb nonentities, yet the [false] gods, in a certain sense, rule over the nations, as objective powers, and that by their overthrow, which forms the inner intellectual side to the external judgments of the people, the nations, in a certain sense, are restored to an unprejudiced condition, since it is again possible to them to decide for God.

The *third* object of the judgments upon the heathen is this. They must, so far as they are heathen nations, and as such resist God, be overthrown, in order that having been delivered from the fetters of idolatry, they may seek Jehovah and learn to worship Him. Ver. 11 b.

Finally, the *fourth* object of these judgments upon the nations is, that Israel may come thereby to the knowledge of the glory and power of his God, and learn to stand in fear of his severity, and bow to his goodness. This is effected by God, in that, beside the judgments without, He causes the import of them — his justice and sentence — to be explained to the people by the prophets. His design is this: That thou mightest only fear me, in order that thou mayest remain safe from the manifestation of my wrath.

But this plan of salvation is defeated by the people's hardness of heart, which blunts the instruments of the divine proclamation and of regulating the [seiner, His] kingdom; and the judgment must come also upon Israel: there will only be a remnant, that will enter upon the deserted fields of Philistia, Ammon, and Moab.

The final and total aim of the judgment is, therefore, certainly Israel, but not so much the present Israel, who, rather, is, like the heathen, under the training of God, and is within this training certainly nearest to Him, yet not to such a degree that the heathen should come into consideration merely as objects of the judgment, for also for them the goal of worshipping Jehovah is presented in prospect; and Israel, if he does not receive correction, likewise incurs their judgments. The final object is rather the future Israel, the remnant, to whom, from the nature of the case, the heathen worshippers will also belong.

#### HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

*Of the exhortations which God, by his guidance of the world's destiny, directs to those who are called to his salvation.*

(1.) He exhorts us to repentance by the severe punishments which He brings upon the evil-doers (iii. 6); by the majestic power with which He desolates populous cities (ii. 4-6); He humbles the proud and leaves nothing unpunished (ii. 8-10). He reminds us also that the most powerful nations are not too powerful for Him (ii. 12), that the most distant are not too distant, the most populous not too numerous (ii. 13 f.) for Him to bring down their secure arrogance and to deliver up to scorn and contempt those who trample others under foot (ii. 15). He who considers this rightly must surely perceive that God intends it for the destruction of every being antagonistic to him upon earth (iii. 11), and that He is a righteous God (iii. 5).

(2.) He exhorts us to *faith*. The promises, which He has given to his own, are not destroyed by any judgments, but only confirmed anew (ii. 7 9): and there is not one of the great works which are done under the sun, upon which an illustrative

ight does not fall from his Word (iii. 5). No one has an excuse that God has not drawn near to him (iii. 7), and that He has not also had his highest interests in view (ii. 11).

(3.) But how little do men profit by warnings! Refer, e. g., to Jerusalem (iii. 1-3); and to ourselves (iii. 7).

On chap. ii. 4. God's ways of destruction are also ways of grace (Acts of the Apostles, viii. 26). — Ver. 7. Our hope of the future rests alone upon grace; and we need not wonder, though our gracious guidance leads through chastisements, on account of sin adhering [to us]. The remnant of Baal must be driven out, in order that the remnant of God may come to the light. — Ver. 8. Murmur not at poisonous tongues. God hears better than thou that in which thou art unfairly dealt with: pray for them who injure thee, for the injury weighs upon them and not upon thee. The memory of God is one of the most fearful things of which a man can think. God notices so particularly the dishonor done to his people for the reason that only those belong to his people, who take no heed of dishonor, and are not allowed to avenge themselves. But take heed that you are not reviled on account of your own sins. Such reviling God does not punish, but it is itself punishment. — Ver. 11. Prophecy will certainly come to pass and not fail. Even the smallest and most distant island is known to God and is included in his plan of salvation. But how shall they believe if it is not preached to them? Where the fear of God has been abandoned, in a country or among men, a salutary fear of Him must intervene, in order that his worship may be restored. On 13 ff. compare the Homiletical Suggestions on Nahum.

Chap. iii. ver. 1. God addresses his own city the most severely (Am. iii. 2). The way of destruction begins with obstinacy against God: then comes pollution by vice, finally the destruction of conscience, which becomes manifest in open acts of violence and crime. — Ver. 2. He who listens to God's voice, has this advantage from it, that he learns prudence. He who trusts in Him has the advantage, that he can draw near to Him at all times with assured confidence. We know obedience by prudence, faith by confidence. Disobedience is folly, and despondency unbelief. — Ver. 3. Strength and bravery do not govern a country; even the lion is a strong and brave animal. They must be restrained by the fear of God and guided to the right objects. A speedy sentence often does more harm and wrong than the detriment arising from ten tardy ones. — Ver. 4. If the salt becomes insipid, wherewith shall it be salted? He who speaks in God's name should always speak with fear and trembling, and as if he were going to stand to-morrow before the judgment seat. — Ver. 5. No one is so liable to profane what is holy as a priest; and no one is so responsible. Thou shouldst offer no violence to the Word of God. What it does not say thou shouldst not make it say. Though priests and prophets may be wicked, it is nevertheless wrong to separate one's self from the Church of God. The Lord of Hosts, who does no wrong, is still in the midst of her. Therefore do the sects go so speedily to ruin. We cannot think of anything more touching than the long-suffering love, with which God follows a people and a soul, and keeps always anew, daily and a hundred times, one and the same thing before its eyes, namely, whether it will allow itself to be saved. Dark and confused things are not utterances of God. They all have their light in

themselves and do not require that one should bring in mysteries, which no man sees. Persist ent unbelief is a shamelessness of the soul. How much has God torn from his heart, for the purpose of confirming the Word of his prophets, in order that we might learn to believe. Not merely innumerable men, whom He created, and who were judged according to this prophecy, but his own son. — Ver. 7. It is a singular thing, that even the most faithful counsels and friendly instructions and allurements strengthen in his perversity, him who is already in the wrong way. He has shame, but false; and there is no stronger enemy of the true shame than the false.

LUTHER: On chap. ii. ver. 6. The most magnificent and powerful cities, which were subdued under no king but David, are so laid waste and razed, as Hieronymus frequently states that one sees remaining only some ruined portions. — Ver. 9. These surrounding nations have all been scattered and exterminated by the Persians, Romans, etc., so that they have not been able to retain even their name, which they bore of old; they have all been united into one nation with the name of Arabians. — Chap. iii. ver. 1 ff. Although the pure unadulterated word is accomplished, yet some will always be found, who will adulterate the word and the true service of God, until Christ, at his last advent, will make an end of this evil. — Ver. 7. In these few words the prophet has briefly expressed what belongs to an honest Christian life, for the fear of God brings with it faith, humility of heart, so that we hold the majesty of the Lord in all honor. Discipline [Ger. *Zucht*; Heb. *Musar*] includes in it outwardly good morals, so that we may walk together, one with another, with propriety and honor, without the displeasure of the brethren.

STARKE: On ver. 5. Even in Christendom there are many who practice Canaan's doctrine and life: may God free the Church from them. — Ver. 6. Compare Luke xiii. 5. — Ver. 7. The wealth of the godless is preserved for the pious. — Ver. 9. God confirms his promises with zeal for the consolation of the godly, his threatenings for the terror of the wicked. — Ver. 11. In the New Testament the service and the worship of God are confined to no fixed place. — Ver. 13. When God has warned a city many years by a Jonah, Nahum, Zephaniah, at last the punishment comes suddenly. — Ver. 14. Cities, castles, houses, which are built with much pride by the toiling sweat and blood of poor people, usually come to a mournful end. — Ver. 15. Whoever says, I am he, and there is none besides, robs God of an honor which belongs to Him alone. — Chap. iii. ver. 2. It is a certain indication of approaching destruction, when the people become more obstinate by punishment. — Ver. 3. Contempt of God's Word causes corruption among all classes. — Ver. 5. The more one despises God's Word, the more will God continue in the teaching of it. — Ver. 7. Genuine repentance obtains not only certain forgiveness of sins, but also often averts temporal punishments. Unbelievers are more assiduous in evil than believers in good.

RIEGER: On chap. ii. ver. 4 ff. Israel has often been stimulated to zeal by the surrounding nations. For example, they would also have a king like the heathen around them; they fretted themselves, on the ground that the other nations should so advance and become great in their idolatry, and that they themselves, possessing the true worship of God, should so decline. Therefore the judge-

ments executed upon other nations are so frequently held up before them : partly because all these are under the government of God, who has fixed and beforetime determined their boundary how far and how long each nation should have its habitation ; partly to show what kind of a distinction God makes, in all His judgments, between his people and between the heathen, and how in these He always remembers the covenant with their fathers and guides them to the fulfilment of his promise ; that those shall be blessed that bless the seed of Abraham, and that those shall be cursed who curse them. For this reason also their excessive arrogance toward Israel and their pleasure in his misfortunes are charged so high to the account of these nations. O seek humility ! What may one bring upon himself by his vainglorious mouth !

**GREGORY THE GREAT :** On ver. 10. Other vices drive away merely the virtues, with which they stand in natural contradiction ; wrath drives away patience ; drunkenness, soberness ; but pride is in nowise satisfied with the extirpation of a single virtue, but arms itself against everything good in the soul, and utterly corrupts it like a pest, so that under its influence every work, although it may be adorned with the appearance of virtue, nevertheless no longer serves God, but vain self-glory.

**EUSEBIUS :** Ver. 11. In Zephaniah the appearance of Christ is evidently connected with the ex-

tirpation of idolatry and with the worship of God on the part of the heathen.

**BUKER :** Whilst God destroys all the nations around, and thereby shows that what they worshipped as divinities, are nothing but false gods, since in the time of need of their worshippers, they afford them neither support, nor shelter, He makes the gods themselves disappear.

**BUKER :** Ver. 12. Observe, He calls it *His sword*. No evil comes upon any one in which the hand of God is not.

**PFAFF :** Ver. 15. To the Lord there is nothing more detestable than the pride of self-arrogating men. How well He knows to punish it with terrible power ; how his wrath hastens to humble the proud.

**BUKER :** Chap. iii. ver. 2. As it is the beginning and foundation of all salvation to hear the Word of God with faith, so contempt of the Word of God is the source of all corruption. If a man despises the Word of God, then the next thing is that he refuses all amendment, because he is well pleased with himself and imagines everything which is in him good. And this is the climax of perversion of the life from God.

**BUKER :** Ver. 4. There is no divine gift on which Satan does not cast his filth. So he has also polluted prophecy.

**BECK :** The wicked one makes an idol of the earthly spirit of the age in the polymorphean practice of error extending itself over the entire circle of the earth.

## THE SALVATION.

### CHAPTER III. 8-20.

**Ver. 8** Therefore wait for me is the saying of Jehovah,  
For the day when I rise up to the prey ;<sup>1</sup>  
For it is my right to gather nations together,  
To assemble kingdoms ;  
To pour upon them my fury,  
All the heat of my anger ;  
For by the fire of my zeal  
The whole earth shall be consumed.

**9** For then I will turn to the nations a pure lip,  
That they may all call upon the name of Jehovah ;  
That they may serve Him with one shoulder.<sup>2</sup>

**10** From beyond the rivers of Cush  
My worshippers,<sup>3</sup> the daughter of my dispersed ones  
Will present my offering.

**11** In that day thou wilt not be ashamed  
On account of all thy doings,  
By which thou hast transgressed against me,  
For then will I remove from the midst of thee  
Thy proud exulting ones, [or, those that exult in thy pride],  
And thou shalt no more carry thyself proudly in my holy mountain.

**12** And I will leave in the midst of thee

A people poor and bowed down,  
And they shall trust in the name of Jehovah.

- 13** The remnant of Israel will not commit wickedness ;  
They will not speak lies ;  
And in their mouth will not be found a tongue of **deceit** ;  
But they will feed and lie down  
And none will make them afraid.
- 14** Exult, thou Daughter Zion ;  
Shout <sup>4</sup> O Israel ;  
Rejoice, and exult with all the heart,  
O Daughter, Jerusalem.
- 15** Jehovah has removed thy judgments ;  
He has cleared <sup>5</sup> away thine enemy ;  
The King of Israel, Jehovah, is in the midst of **thee** ;  
Thou wilt see evil no more.
- 16** In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem :  
Fear not Zion, let not thy hands be feeble.
- 17** Jehovah, thy God, is in the midst of thee,  
A Mighty One, who saves ;  
He rejoices over thee with gladness ;  
He is silent in his love ;  
He exults over thee with rejoicing.
- 18** I gather together those that mourn for the **festivals** ;  
They are of thee ;  
Reproach presses upon them.
- 19** Behold, at that time, I will deal with all thy **oppressors**,  
And I will save the limping,  
And gather the outcasts,  
And make them a praise and a name  
In every land of their shame.
- 20** At that time I will bring you,  
Yea, at the time I will gather you ;  
For I will make you a name and a praise  
Among all the nations of the earth,  
When I turn your captivity before your eyes, saith **Jehovah**.

## TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

**Ver. 8.** — The LXX., the other Greek Versions, and the Syriac, render תְּעַד by *testimony* or *witness*; but when it ~~is~~ this meaning it is pointed תְּעֵד. Comp. Gen. xl ix. 27; Is. xxxiii. 23. It is derived from תִּדְעַת, to rush upon, to attack. See Ges. s. v.

[2] Ver. 9. — תָּבִרְכָּה בְּכָל־, one shoulder, i. e., with unanimity. The figure is taken from those who carry burdens with even shoulders.

[3] Ver. 10. — תְּבַרְבַּע, from תְּבַרְבַּע, to burn incense, to pray as a suppliant. Some interpreters make it the subject of the verb "bring;" others, the object. See Exeget.

[4] Ver. 14. — גִּמְרָנָה is plural, because Israel is addressed as a plurality.

[5] Ver. 15. — מִפְּלֶת, *piel*, signifies to clear from impediments, to put in order, to prepare, e. g., a house, Gen. xxiv. 31; Lev. xiv. 36; a way, Is. xl. 3; lvii. 14; lxii. 10; Mal. iii. 1.

[6] Ver. 18. — דָּבָר, the time of the feast, when all Israel gathered together to rejoice before Jehovah. It also signifies an assembly, and place of assembly. — C. E.]

## EXEGETICAL.

*The Way to the Accomplishment of the Salvation opened by the Judgment.*

Vers. 8-10. *The Salvation of the Heathen following the Judgment.* Directly at the close of the first threatening proclamation begins the address (iii. 8), directed to the meek of the earth (ii. 3), the second cheerful address stretching over the intermediate statement of the causes.

What we should expect according to the course of thought at the close of iii. 7, — therefore I will rise to the judgment upon Jerusalem, — was already said, chap. i.; now comes the consolation by which that threatening of judgment is tolerable.

Ver. 8. (According to the remark of the Masorah the only verse of the O. T., in which all the letters of the alphabet, inclusive of the five finals, occur.)

Therefore — לְזַעַן is employed, as it often is, in prophetic language, to indicate not exactly the immediate consequence of what precedes, but the link of the connection, *i. e.*, of the transition from threatening to promise (comp. Is. x. 24; xxvii. 9; and other passages in Ges., *Thes.*, s. v.): but therefore still wait upon me, ye humble, thou remnant of the promise (ii. 3, 7, 9; comp. Is. viii. 17; Hab. ii. 3), saith Jehovah until the day that I rise up to the prey (so Drusius, Cölln, Strauss, Keil, following the Masoretic text, translate it. On the contrary, LXX., Syr., Hitz., following the reading לְעֵד, render it “for a witness.” The sequel favors the former translation) for it is my right, my fixed sentence uttered against the earth, not to be retracted, to gather the nations together. There is no intimation here that the language refers to a gathering together of the heathen, in the sense that those among the heathen desirous of salvation fall to Jehovah as a prey (Strauss, Keil); the intervention of a judgment, which is a necessary condition of the salvation, previously fixes the connection. The last act of the judgment, as it is a fixed element of the prophetic eschatology, the final gathering of the heathen nations before Jerusalem, in order to be destroyed in the decisive struggle (comp. above, Introd. p. 9), is here represented under the point of view, that God, after He has subdued the separate powers that resisted Him, each in its own land (chap. ii. 4 ff.), now causes the collective mass of nations to flock together, in order to shatter in one last decisive struggle everything opposed to God, in one day (comp. Micah iv. 12). That is an object of hope for the meek of the land, and therefore the prophet proceeds: wait for me until I (the ל and the suffix in לְקַרְבָּנִי require, what interpreters have overlooked, that this infinitive, like קָרְבַּנִי לִיּוֹב, must be construed with בְּגַדְלָה), bring the kingdoms in crowds, and pour out upon them my fury, all my burning wrath. Theodorus Mopsu makes the language to be addressed to the exiles: “Καὶ διατελεῖτε δὲ πρὸς ἐμὸν ἀφοράντες καὶ τὴν παρ’ ἐμοῦ οὐθείαν ἀναμένοντες, ἦν κατὰ καιρὸν ὑμῶν παρέξω, ὃς ἐκ νεκρῶν ὑμάς ἀνίστων καὶ ἀπαλλάσσων μετὰ τῆς αἰχμαλωσίας ἐπανάγοντας δὲ πάντας ὑμᾶς ἐπὶ τὰ σκηναῖς.” This view has, at the first glance, something in its favor: the consolatory moment intended for Israel in the prophecy of the judgment, ver. 8, comes out very plainly in it. Notwithstanding it is hardly correct, though Strauss asserts to it; since Zephaniah does not predict the

exile, but everywhere addresses the people in Jerusalem, and the thought introduced by Theodorus into this verse from the restoration of the captives first occurs ver. 18 ff., but even there in such a way, that the flower of the congregation are supposed to be remaining in Jerusalem, and the captives are supposed to come as scattered apart from these (also in a similar way the שׁבוֹת seems to be employed in the oldest prophets), comp. the לְעֵד, ver. 20. For by the fire of my zeal the whole earth shall be devoured; everything, which is not from God; the day of judgment, which comes after the separate acts of judgment, which turned to the advantage of Israel, is entirely general; as He judges the incorrigible Israel, chap. i., so He also judges the degenerate nations: only the Anavim [meek], who are enjoined to wait for Him, are excepted. But it lies in the nature of the case that that for which they are to wait, is properly not the day of judgment itself (Am. v. 18), but the result, of which it is the *conditio sine qua non*.

Ver. 9. For then, after the destruction of the power antagonistic to God upon earth, first of all of the power antagonistic to Him in the heathen world, whose judgment, according to what follows, is not considered as a destruction of the substance of life, but as a destruction of the δυνάμεις under heaven alienating the life from God (comp. ii. 11), will I turn to the nations, which have hitherto with unclean lip called upon their idols (Hos. ii. 19; Ps. xvi. 4), a pure lip; I will give it to them, I will create it in them. This act of grace, which, in Is. vi., is represented under the view of the expiating act of God, is here exhibited under that of the new creative act.

The two views [Momentel] complete one another [Many interpreters understand the “pure lips” of the lip of God Himself, which He will employ in friendly language to the nations (Luth., Cocc., Marek, Hofmann). But that God’s lip is pure is self-evident; it will not be pure then for the first time, but it is always pure. Our translation (comp. Theodorot: “Καθαρὸν δὲ χεῖλος τὸ μὴ θεούς ἀλλὰ θεύς ὄνθμαζον”) is required by the connection, and is also given by the oldest versions (Chald., Syr., Aq., Symm., Vulg.). For the expression [*i. e.*, turn, etc.], comp. 1 Sam. x. 9; Mal. iii. 23, in A. V. Mal. iv. 6. — C. E.]

The purity of the lips proves itself by the fact that they all call upon the name of Jehovah — the unity of the children of God existing before the flood, at the beginning of the history of revelation, is restored, Gen. iv. 26 — That they serve Him with one shoulder; compare the expression “with one mouth,” 1 Kings xxii. 13. “The unity is restored by means of all of them bearing the same yoke, *i. e.*, the yoke of Jehovah, Jer. ii. 20.” Hitzig. Compare also Is. ix. 3. Those who escape from the great slaughter of the judgment (ver. 8), are dispersed into their own lands, and there Jehovah’s new work of grace reaches them: compare the fuller expansion of the same thought, Is. lxvi. 19 f.

Ver. 10. Even from beyond the rivers of Cush — from the southern extremity of the known world, which also appeared to be (ii. 12) the southern terminus of the judgments, will my worshippers (the signification of fragrance, which Ges., Ew., Maur., give to the word עֲרָבִי, is untenable), my dispersed people (on תְּבִלָה, comp. at Micah iv. 14), bring my meat-offering; the

saved heathen become like a wide diaspora, after they have received pure lips, join themselves to the organism of the people of God [*Heilsgemeinde*, the congregation of salvation], as Is-iah had prophesied, chap. xviii., to which Zephaniah refers by repeating the words (comp. Is. xviii. 7). [The Vulg., Luth., in his Comin., Marek, Hitzig, consider the words בְּרַפְּגֵץ שָׁבֵר and שָׁבֵר as two coordinate nominatives. Not only the parallel, Is. xviii. 7, decides in favor of this construction, but also the context, which, in ver. 11, applies only to Israel. Compare also Mal. i. 11. De Wette, Hengstenberg, Strauss, Keil, with Luther's translation, take the words as accusatives: from beyond the rivers of *Cush* will they bring my worshippers, my dispersed ones, as my meat-offering. But this thought is introduced into this passage only from the reference to Is. lxvi. 20. The devotional-allegorical turn, which is combined with this view, that the heathen will convert again to God the Israelites dispersed among them (Hengstenb., Keil), is entirely foreign to the passage, since the dispersed, according to the entire connection, even though Israelites were to be understood by them, could not after all be considered as unconverted; and the act of bringing them, according to the usage of prophetic language (comp. Is. xlxi. 22, and above), is an act of homage, and not of conversion. There are other interpretations, namely, the old versions, which seem to rest, in part, on different readings, comp. in Cölln, p. 56]. *My meat-offering*, is that which is due to me, comp. thy vows (Ps. lvi. 13 [12]).

Vers. 11-13. *The Restoration of the Righteous Remnant in Israel.* In that day, thou, the congregation of Israel, wilt not be ashamed of all thy doings, by which thou hast transgressed against me, and on account of which it is impossible for thee to enter, as thou art, into the perfected salvation (ver. 7): for then will I remove, this prediction is proved by the whole connection to be *fut. exactum*; then will I have removed from thee those that rejoice in thy pride (comp. Is. xiii. 3), so that only the meek are left, and thou wilt no more pride thyself (*נִזְנַתְּךָ*, fem. inf., Ges., 45, 1, b) upon my holy mountain. Pride would certainly bring shame after it (Is. iii.), but it will be destroyed.

Ver. 12. And I leave in the midst of thee a people bowed down and poor, which, because it consists of עֲבָדִים, afflicted, are in the right disposition to become עֲבָדִים. [In themselves the words עֲבָדִים and עֲבָדָה, which, besides this, occurs only once in the singular, do not point out the antithesis of the external pressure and of the internal humility, but they meet in the same fundamental meaning; compare, in opposition to Hengstenberg and the interpreters that follow him, the proof given by Hupfeld at Ps. ix. 13; but in both the passages of our prophet (ii. 3; iii. 12) that antithesis is required by the connection and parallelism]. They will trust in the name of Jehovah: antithesis to iii. 2.

Ver. 13. The remnant of Israel will do no wrong, like God Himself, iii. 5; Lev. xix. 2, and one shall not find in their mouth the tongue of deceit, which is now found even in the mouth of their prophets (ver. 4). But they will feed, in the undisturbed enjoyment of the fulfilled promise they live and rejoice in the good shepherd (Micah vii.

14), and lie down, comp. ii. 7, and no one terrifies them, as it is promised, Lev. xxvi. 6.

Vers. 14-20. *The New Jerusalem.* As in Micah vii. 14 ff., the prophecy here takes a turn. It has from the beginning, and especially in this concluding promise, the tenor of the discourse in Micah vi. 7, a tenor removed from the empirical present and raised to a jubilation over the accomplishment; with dithyrambic psalm-tones to the end, in such a manner, however, that by means of the expression, "in that day," vers. 16, 19 f., the prophetic character is maintained: "*Confirmat superiorem doctrinam exhortans fideles ad gaudium, quasi jan pre oculis erastet, quod antea pollicitus est.*" Calvin. *Exult thou daughter Zion* (comp. Zech ii. 14; ix. 9).

Ver. 15. Jehovah has removed the judgments: "everything that He appoints concerning them," the judgments, which were held out in prospect for the great day, vers. 7, 5; *swept away* thine enemy, as in Micah vii. 8, a common designation of the world-power (Babylon, Nimrod, comp. Com. on Micah, p. 51) in all its relations. *The King of Israel is Jehovah in the midst of thee*, as Obadiah had promised for this time of salvation, ver. 20, comp. Zech. ii. 14 f. (Strauss, Keil: *the King of Israel, Jehovah, is in the midst of thee*; but this method of placing the [noun in] apposition before is not Old Testament, but modern usage.) *Thou wilt see evil no more*, neither evil, but Him alone, in whom is all good, Hos. iii. 5, nor sin, ver. 11, for the Holy One does not suffer it in his presence, Dent. xxiii. 15 (14). Therefore thou canst be fearless, ver. 16 f.: *On that day will men say to Jerusalem, fear not, Zion!* — Zion is in the vocative — let not thy hands sink down, in slackness and despondency. The understanding of the address as a designation of the new name (they shall call Jerusalem: "Fear not Zion; let not thy hands sink down!" Ewald), is certainly entirely in accordance with the prophetic spirit, but it is introduced into this passage from Is. lxii. 11 ff., and is not indicated by anything. According to this view Zion should be construed, like Jerusalem, with י. The hands have become slack at the approach of the day of Jehovah, Is. xiii. 7: "*Omnis vigor ita concidit metu, ut nullum membrum suo fungatur officio.*" Calvin. The requirement that the slackness shall cease, shows that the judgment is past.

Ver. 17. Jehovah, thy God, is in the midst of thee, a mighty one, who is a Saviour; comp. Jer. xiv. 9. The בָּרוּךְ יְהוָה, Is. ix. 5 (6), promised by the prophets, is Jehovah Himself, comp. Is. x. 21. He rejoices over thee in delight, since He sees no more anything impure, and the old marriage covenant is gloriously restored anew, Is. lxii. 5, comp. Hos. ii. 19. He is silent (Anton, Hitzig, following the LXX. read שָׁמַדְתִּי instead of שָׁמַרְתִּי: He does a new thing) in his love: a silence arising no longer from forbearance, in order to punish at last (Ps. l. 21); but because He has nothing more to reprehend, comp. vers. 5 and 11. His love is, then, a blessed enjoyment and nurturing. A beautiful anthropopathy. Calvin: "*Deus ergo tuus quietus erit in amore suo, i. e., erunt haec summae deliciæ; hæc erit precipua Dei tui voluntas, ubi te fovebit; quemadmodum si quis uxorem dilectissimam foveat: ita etiam Deus tuus quiescit in amore tuo.*" He will rejoice over thee with rejoicing, Is. lxv. 19. Bucer: "*Cum amor Dei erga suos verbis humanis explicari nequeat, quicquid dominus*

*in amore vehemens est et flagrans, illi se dominus comparat. Hinc modo patris, nunc matris tunc et mariti affectum sibi sumit.*" Both silence and rejoicing belong to love, as salvation is called an eternal rest and an eternal praising of God. And in this rejoicing the whole Church is to have a part.

Ver. 18. Those that mourn, נִגְרָי instead of נִגְנִי part. Niph. from נִגְנֵן = נִגְנַת, Olsh., 192 a. Rem. 266 a; so also נִגְנָה, Lam. i. 4; Vulg.: *nugae!* far from the festive assembly, the great festival of the accomplishment of salvation in the New Jerusalem, which, in accordance with Hos. xii. 10 (9), is also represented, in Zech. xiv. 16 ff., under the figure of the Feast of Tabernacles as being the most joyful, I will gather together, I will gather [them] from the dispersion, comp. ver. 20 (for the constr. comp. Ges., 116, 1): they are of thee (זֶבֶח, as in Ezra ii. 59) [see also Is. lviii.

12; Ps. lxviii. 27, זֶבֶח expressing descent or origin — C. E.], repreach presses upon them, literally, as a burden does. The suffix in זֶבֶח refers to the collective idea פּוֹלָה or שְׁבִירָה existing in נִגְנָה (Hitzig). In order that they may be disburdened and set free, the destruction of the enemies, in whose fetters the mourners are held, is necessary.

Ver. 19. Behold at that time I will deal with עֲשֵׂה intransitive with emphatic meaning as in Ez. xxiii. 25; xvii. 17; Jer. xviii. 23) all thine oppressors, and that in such a way that I will heal the limping and gather together the dispersed, (designations of the Church tried with suffering, from Micah iv. 6, comp. at the passage) and make them a praise and a name (as it was promised in Deut. xxvi. 19) in every land of their shame. "Praise and name," hendiadys for a celebrated name, which is praised, so that the original promise, Gen. xii., is fulfilled, and all nations long to be invested with the citizenship of the new community. Ps. lxxxvii. Comp. also Zech. viii. 23 and Is. iv. 1.

Ver. 20. At that time will I bring you, — the sentence, like all the statements of the verse, has something compendious, "abbreviatory." נִבְרָא, in itself, signifies neither to bring to a possession, to rank and condition (Ewald), nor to lead out and in (Keil). Rather the whole sentence becomes clear only from the reference to Deut. xxx. 3 ff., which passage the prophet quotes as one known to the hearers. To this, נִבְרָא, ver. 19, comp. Deut. xxx. 4, which accords nearly quite with Micheal, has already pointed; likewise צְבָא and שְׁבִירָה, which soon follow, point to it. And thence the elliptical נִבְרָא receives also (xxx. 5) the signification "to lead home." It certainly does not have the same meaning in the passage Is. xiv. 2, from which Hitzig and Strauss derive this meaning, — there the object of the action is directly added [to the verb], — but it appears in closer correlation to this verse [20] in Jer. xxxi. 8. And at that time

I will gather you. Instead of the verb fin. נִבְרָא, the infin. with the suffix is chosen as in Dan. xi. 1, probably to produce a conformity of sound with נִבְרָא (Hitzig). For I will make you a name . . . before your eyes, saith Jehovah. The conclusion of Zephaniah's prediction of judgment

reaches back to the beginning of that of Obadiah.

[Keil: "A fresh reason is assigned for the promise, by a further allusion to the glorification appointed for the people of God above all the nations of the earth, coupled with the statement that this will take place at the turning of their captivity, i.e., when God shall abolish the misery of his people, and turn it into salvation ("turn the captivity," as in chap. ii. ver. 7), and that "before your eyes": i.e., not that "ye yourselves shall see the salvation and not merely your children, when they have closed your eyes" (Hitzig) — for such an antithesis would be foreign to the context — but as equivalent to "quite obviously, so that the turn in events stands out before the eye," analogous to "ye will see eye to eye" (Is. lii. 8; cf. Luke ii. 30). This will assuredly take place, for Jehovah has spoken it. — C. E.]

#### DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

The ways of God lead not to death, but to life; for He is a faithful God. But just because He is faithful, He adheres not only to the promises, which He has made, but also to the conditions of salvation, which exist in his holiness, and whose substance is embodied in the law. Accordingly the revealed agency of God and its progress to accomplishment have a twofold fundamental character. In the first place there is a work of judgment, so that the whole history of the kingdom is exhibited as a process of judgment, as a purifying, cleansing, struggling, and demolishing to the last. In the second place there is a work of salvation, a new-creating work, so that the same history is presented as a progressive communication of the divine life-germ, advancing to the complete recreation of that which has become corrupt by sin. To represent only one of these views as the central one is wrong; yea they do not in reality allow themselves to be so much as wholly separated; each receives its internal form by the irradiating lines of the other. As by the process of judgment salvation shines throughout as expiation, forgiveness, amnesty to the elect, so by the process of salvation the judgment appears as sifting, removing, and pronouncing death upon that which is unholy. Both views form a perfect complex, so that one cannot be conceived without the other. As they form in this complexity the foundation of all prophetic preaching, so do they also that of prophetic eschatology. Hence their separate elements are clear in their internal organic connection.

In his judicial proceeding it is not enough that God should overthrow the hostility against his kingdom just at the point where it becomes directly actual by a temporal juncture of circumstances; that He should punish the heathen powers only so far as they come successively and singly into historical contact with the Church; there must be a complete breaking up of heathenism, so far as it is a system of positive opposition to Him: in this the judgment culminates. This final conflict of the judgment, briefly announced by Zephaniah, ver. 8, more fully exhibited by Ezekiel xxxviii. f., and Zechariah xii. f., supposes a concentrated gathering together against the kingdom of God of all the powers, which have not yet been added to it. If this march is elsewhere indicated by the announcement that the nations of the remotest distance will be incited to r<sup>ash</sup> agams<sup>r</sup> Jerusalem

Zephaniah indicates it by the simple emphasis of the words, "gather together."

It is not incomprehensible that this gathering together, so far as its occurrence is a necessity required by the history of the kingdom, does not lie in the sphere of free-will, and that on this account its ultimate cause is referred to God. (Acts of the Apostles iv. 28). It was potentially fulfilled by the struggle of Christ with the combined powers of heathenism, and of Judaism dissevered from the kingdom of God, of fanaticism, epicureanism and skepticism (Pharisees, and priests, Sadducees, Herod, and Pilate), avarice and inconstancy (Judas, Peter, and the multitude), death, and the Evil One. These are the idols of the world, and its centralized power is destroyed by the work of redemption (1 John iii. 8). But the realization of this ideal in history which the prophecy requires possibly not only in accordance with its form, but also in accordance with its substance, and which cannot be conceived without the actual taming of all these powers in the kingdom of God, is still unaccomplished. "The prophetic representation of the victory over the antithetocratic central powers reaches into the most distant time, and we must carefully guard against any weakening by rash interpretation," Beck. To the form of the prophecy, on the other hand, belongs the expression, "to gather," so far as it seems to contain a local reference. That it treats of a gathering on the field of spiritual conflict is evident from the fact, that after this decisive battle, the separate central heathen powers, which have been subdued, experience and become partakers of God's work of grace in their lands.

This work of grace is the restoration of the people [*der Völker*, the peoples] of God to the kingdom of God by the most ancient and most peculiar mark of God's children, calling upon the name of Jehovah (Gen. iv. 26). The Word is the central idea of all revelation: the Word on the part of God is revelation itself in the widest extent: the Word on the part of man is the concentrated symbol of the life of the human soul. (Comp. *Oehler*, art., "Name" in *Herzog, Real-Encyc.*, x. 193 ff.). The purity of the lips manifested and effected by the calling upon the name of God, is at the same time purity of the inner man (Matt. xv. 18). The other constitutive elements of divine worship — bowing and sacrifice — fall in with the expression. And indeed the bloody sacrifice is abolished after the offering of the great sacrifice i. 6, with which the reconciliation is connected (comp. ver. 9 with Is. vi. 7; also Zech. xiii. 1). The offerings of the heathen world joining themselves to God are represented by the mention of the meat-offering. (Comp. Mal. i. 11.) There is at least tacitly promised thereby an essential change of the Mosaic worship for the time of salvation — as it is connected solidarily with the demolition of the barrier of the law between Israel and the nations, between Canaan and the distant lands. It can be nothing else than an entirely new order of things, in which the worshippers of Jehovah, "the congregation of his dispersed ones," even beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, are found among the sons of Ham. The beginning of the fulfillment is related by Luke in the Acts of the Apostles viii. 26 ff., and the entire prophecy of this book chimes in with his narrative throughout. (Comp. Zeph. ii. 5 with Acts of the Apostles viii. 26; iii. 10 with viii. 27; iii. 9 with viii. 37; iii. 17 with viii. 39).

If an entirely new creation is necessary in the

heathen world to effect the salvation, then the matter of moment in Israel is to restore by purification the pure heart of the poor in spirit, of the humble life of faith, which procures righteousness before God. The new Israel will be essentially different from the present in so far as they will be no more liable to punishment. As in the case of the heathen so also here the fact of reconciliation, of purification, and of forgiveness is tacitly presupposed (comp. however, ver. 14:) although they have sinned as Israel, as a nation, yet in the time of salvation there will be a remnant (comp. *Com. on Micah*, p. 32; *Com. on Nahum*, p. 36; *ante, Introd.* p. 9), which is not swept off together with the others in the judgment, which has also obtained forgiveness and accepted it in humility, and which now places its confidence and hope only in the name of Jehovah. But the proud, who place their confidence in themselves, who little consider that the mountain, on which they celebrate their self-sufficiency, is the abode of the Holy God, will be swept away in the purification. It also belongs to the complete humility of Israel, that they should abandon the narrowness of their particularistic pride. In this way this fact is connected with the former, by which it is worthy of consideration, that the conversion of the heathen is placed before the restoration of Israel.

Both are *works of grace*: in the case of the heathen the grace lies in the entirely new beginning; in the case of Israel, in the fact, that after they have become, according to human view, a wretched miserable remnant, as such they obtain favor. Such has been God's way from the beginning: the younger sons are his chosen in the history of the patriarchs and kings; when Israel had pined away in the bondage of Egypt, Moses arose; when toward the end of the time of the judges they had almost ceased to be a nation (1 Sam. xiii. 19), Samuel came. So will it be also s: the time of the consummation.

So also the marks of the work of grace in Israel and among the heathen agree. The signature of the new Israel is given with the word of truth, as the signature of the dispersed congregation, gathered from the heathen, is given with the word of confession. What precedes the times of the consummation are on the one hand the times of ignorance; and on the other the times of falsehood. Falseness is the mortal enemy, which resists the development of the kingdom of God from within; and so long as it is not removed, so long the consummation is delayed. John viii. 44. And as among the heathen, so also in Israel the form of the new kingdom of God is a perfect *worship of God*: the consummation bears the character of a festival. So had Isaiah, chap. iv., already described, after the type of the Feast of Tabernacles, the achievement of salvation, which is allotted to the remnant of Israel after the judgment and reconciliation.

But this is the preëminence of Israel over the heathen, that they are the centre of the new kingdom, and that Jehovah dwells in the midst of them as a Mighty One and a Saviour. The heathen come into, but "salvation comes from the Jews," and the new congregation, although the heathen (under the supposition, that they acknowledge this privileged position of Israel with praise) are added to it, is essentially the continuation and completion of the O. T. Church. It is indeed nothing else than the fulfilment of the promises which were made to the fathers, and which are chartered and sealed in the Torah

Only that this continuation and completion pass through the deep rupture, which discloses itself in the name of "the lame and the outcasts;" and that the covenant of a holy and blessed love between God and the Israel, whom He has abandoned in all lands to deserved shame, must be a new covenant. And indeed the complete and most peculiar nature of this new covenant was not exhibited in the time of the prophet: it will itself be a revelation and that a visible one: *before the eyes of his own, God will carry it into effect.* The Word of God, which was communicated to Moses and the prophets, and which his Church has heard with the ear, will appear to the eye in the fullness of times. *Heb. i. 1 ff.; John i. 5, 9 f.*

Concerning the double relation, in which this prophecy places the heathen to salvation (vers. 8, 19; 9, 10) compare at Nah. i.

#### HOMILETICAL.

*What is the mission of the church, which God has made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light? (ver. 15).*

1. We should in the immovable unity of the Spirit, who is mighty in us, stand fast against the assembled powers of darkness, until they are overcome (ver. 8).

2. We should carry on the contest in the name of God and with pure lips. The purity of the lip is acquired and preserved by the constant calling upon God (ver. 9, a, b).

3. Those who believe should not press shoulder against shoulder, nor should they wish to be one higher than another, but to become one in humble adoration (ver. 9 c.).

4. We should not fix our hearts on the possessions of the world, but remember that, in this world, we are a scattered church of God, and prepare the offering of the soul for the eternal home (ver. 10).

5. We should in everything hold fast to the one thing needful. Namely, that we have no right to glory through ourselves, but through grace against judgment (vers. 11, 12).

6. We should keep silent at the purifications, by which grace qualifies individuals for the inheritance purchased once for all (vers. 11, 12-19 a, b).

7. We should wage the contest of the light with the weapons of the light and of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, ver. 13 a, and with perfect fearlessness, as the flock of the good shepherd, whom all enemies are too few to resist (ver. 13 b, 16, 17 a).

8. We should always be joyful in the Lord (vers. 14-18). For after the acts of reconciliation He takes delight in man (ver. 17 b).

9. We should walk for the honor of God, as those who know that it is God's will, that his name should not be reviled in us, but praised by the nations (ver. 19 c).

10. We should keep our eyes open to the past and present proofs of the powerful manifestation of God, and to the signs of his coming (ver. 20. *Luke xii. 35.*)

*God's purpose is a missionary purpose.*

Ver. 1. A purpose of external missions (vers. 8-9).

Ver. 2. A purpose of internal missions (vers. 11-10).

*All prophecies are fulfilled in Christ.*

In the holiness and veracity, in the struggles and sufferings, in the humiliation and exaltation of the historical Christ everything meets, which the prophets recorded of the deeds, experiences, and successes of Israel, as the mediator of salvation and of the coming of God for the accomplishment of salvation. He has struggled with the united powers of darkness and vanquished them: He was the poor and humble remnant, who did no wrong and in whom God was present, and whom the Father loved with perfect satisfaction.— Ver. 2. In the advancing acts of salvation, by which the exalted Christ brings his eternal acts in his body, the Church, to their temporal realization and form, is fulfilled continuously what the prophets predicted concerning them, that not merely an individual, but a congregation of the dispersed people of God should be the heir of the promise.— At ver. 8 f. It is God's right to gather together the heathen for wrath. But because He is God grace is the end of his righteous way. Only those who are near to Him thus know Him, and hence wait confidently upon Him, however He may walk abroad in his power spreading terror. A pure lip is the mark of the work of God's grace. If those who belong to Him would think of this, how much less, not merely of filthy speech and buffoonery, which are not becoming, but also of contention, quarreling, anger, and unrighteousness would there be in the world. From the impurity of the lips it comes, that Christendom, instead of serving Him with one consent [*mit einer Schulter*, with one shoulder] becomes more unsettled and rent from day to day.— Ver. 10. There were and are Christians, so-called worshippers of God, who go up the Nile to sell the heathen as slaves to Christians. A meat-offering of abomination (*Is. i. 11 ff.*). Missions should make amends for this.— Ver. 11. The most dangerous desecration of the holy place and of the holy congregation takes place through pride.— Ver. 12. It is painful to the human heart, that it must first become completely poor and humble, before it learns to trust entirely in the name of the living God. This is the reason that the hearts rich in the opinion of the world are richest in dead idols.— Ver. 13. Behold there the marks of the true Church, *congregationes Sanctorum*, Aug. vii. Truly the holiness of the saints comes from the grace of God, and so long as they carry in themselves the flesh of sin their perfection is piece-work. But whoever he be that knowingly and willingly offends and lies and deceives from the bottom of his heart, him the word of God excommunicates, though his lips may be full of hypocritical profession. The pure lip is the lip of the heart. Such sanctification follows, when a soul feeds tranquilly in the pasture, which God has given to it in his Word. Such souls no one alarms. In proportion to the internal separation from the Word, in that proportion are there much anxious looking around and despondency.— Ver. 14 f. The enemy of the Church is in the last instance only one: he, whose works God, who was in Christ and reconciled the world to Himself, has destroyed. The legal practice [*Praxis*] produces in souls fear of the devil as a conqueror; the prophetic and evangelic inspires in them courage against him as a vanquished [enemy].— Ver. 16 f. Zion, let not thy hands become slack. How much is there everywhere to do! and how must it invigorate our alacrity for work, when we know that God, the Mighty One and Saviour, is with us, and that He looks upon our

**work with heartfelt delight.** — Ver. 18. Such work is not a trouble, but a feast. It is a disgrace to him, who does not engage in it. Pray everywhere that God may turn the disgrace of the afflicted, who perish far from work in his kingdom, and gather them. — Ver. 19. We cannot certainly avoid the necessity of bearing for a short time the derision and abuse of the world for the Lord's sake. But it is a paltry view to set this as the final object and result of living Christianity upon earth. By doing so we close our eyes. The final object which we must always keep present to ourselves, is that men should learn to glorify God in his own. But for that active Christianity is necessary. He who strives after the object in another self-chosen way, whether, whilst abandoning the Gospel, he seeks to gain the praise of the crowd, whether whilst turning his back upon his brethren, only hinders the work of God and impedes it. — Ver. 20. How many who belong to the Israel of God by baptism are prisoners in the world. Cease not to pray for your brethren that He may restore them before your eyes. For this the word of promise is given, that the faith of those who labor in this work may be strengthened by it; and that we who are so ready to say, their destruction is at hand, may learn to take shame to ourselves in view of the faithfulness and long-suffering following of God, who speaks there.

**LUTHER:** Ver. 8. The gathering together of the kingdoms and nations is effected through the word of the Gospel, which has been proclaimed to every one throughout the world. — Ver. 12. He describes the Christian Church with few, but yet with most beautiful words; namely, that it is a poor, needy, and oppressed little people, that calls upon the Lord and trusts in Him, which is the highest righteousness and the most exalted worship. This is the true glory of the kingdom of Christ, that we are joyfully and in peace reconciled to God through Jesus Christ. Not that there is no longer any cross reserved for us; not that the world and Satan will not lie in wait for us; but, provided that against all this our conscience is preserved secure, we need not care for it. This is the work of the power of God in us. — Ver. 20. Also the apostles and martyrs came at last to honor before God and the world, who before were considered by the world a despised people; now their memory sounds with thanksgiving, like that of John Huss, and of all who have suffered persecution and death for the glory of God. But the memory of the ungodly perishes.

**STARKE:** The fulfilment of this text is generally placed in the times of the Apostles. Though indeed this interpretation in part is not to be denied, yet it cannot be granted that these prophecies attained their full measure of fulfillment at that time. — Ver. 8. If we are a long time chastised for our sins, we should remember, that we also were a long time disobedient to God, when He warned us against sin; and also that it is no wonder, if He does not soon answer us, because we would not listen soon to Him. — Ver. 10. Believers present themselves as a gift, when they put themselves entirely under obedience to God and mortify the old man. Although the unbelieving Jews still continue in such pride of their relation to God, yet those objects of pride will be put away from them at the time of their conversion, and they will perish with Antichrist, to whom they belong. Though pride is displeasing to God everywhere, yet it is particularly repugnant to Him, when we are proud in the service of God. — Ver.

12. The Christian Church is not to be estimated according to its external appearance. — Ver. 13. Although the pious have their infirmity in them, nevertheless they have, according to the inward man, pleasure in God's law. Where true faith exists, good works also must infallibly follow. Those who have been justified by faith have peace with God and with his creatures. — Ver. 14. The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, etc., Rom. xiv. 17. — Ver. 17. There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenter, much more over the fact that entire Christendom is reconciled to God. He will be silent in his love, *i.e.*, He will be no crier; He will not deal harshly with and utterly cast down the terrified consciences of those who make a false step; He will not magnify trifling faults; in a pharisaic manner make canals out of gnats, and for that reason make the erring to be ill spoken of, that every one may fear to associate with them; but his care will be exercised to raise them up again and to win their heart to him. As He dealt with Peter, the thief, etc., would that all teachers would also deal with poor erring sinners.

**RIEGER:** Ver. 8 ff. When causes of judgment greatly multiply on one side, then God grants largely on the other side much that is conducive to a clear understanding of his word. In the most doubtful times we must also not just consider ourselves and our own as merely a purifying offering of the judgments that befall us, for God can also thence prepare for himself fit instruments for his purposes. — Ver. 11 ff. O, that all the trouble to establish their own righteousness, O that all glorying in the flesh, were brought to an end; that we may enjoy rest without fear, when the father of lies shall be imprisoned, and his [power of] seducing shall be put down with him! — Ver. 14. It is something great when the joy in God and in his grace of those that are pardoned, and God's joy in the fulfillment of his counsel, shall coincide. He to whom all this seems too great, let him only look at the great seal, which is appended to the whole: thus saith the Lord. He can do great things and execute them speedily, when the unbeliever of men or weak faith sees yet no preparation for them. Remember, Lord, this Thy word to Thy servants, upon which thou hast caused us to hope.

**BUCER:** At ver. 8. Things, whose intrinsic nature it is to go far from God, of which one properly says, when they perish, that they are gathered again to Him. — Ver. 9. Whoever acknowledges God in truth can do nothing else than love and proclaim Him.

**HÖCKE:** Heart, mouth, and works meet in the appellation, pure lips. So long as there is agreement among these three hypocrisy has no place in men. But if the heart is not purified, then the lips and works are also unclean, Matt. vi. 22, 23.

**BURCK:** The concordant worship of God corresponds to the pure lip. As once a counterfeit unanimity produced multiplicity and confusion of languages, so unity and purity of speech are about to produce and maintain true unity.

**PFAFF:** Ver. 11. Those who glory in the true church and are still unconverted, are proud saints, who are an abomination to the Lord.

**AUGUSTINE:** Ver. 13. There is a difference between *peccantes* and *peccatores*, just as there is between *scribentes* and *scriptores*.

**BUCER:** Ver. 15. What we suffer is nothing but judgment, *i.e.*, merited evil, and no one can turn it from us, but the Lord, who sends it. He

who apprehends this by faith will learn to bear injuries and will be broken by no suffering.

CALVIN: Ver. 16. On that day He says. But we must wait as long as it pleases God to discipline his people under the cross. All men might have rest from nature and suffer nothing bad, therefore He sets right the too great precipitation, which we are accustomed to have under chastisement.

BUCER: Ver. 17. All blessings are in God. He dwells in the Church, so it has nothing further to desire.

CALVIN: What seems more alien to the glory of God, than to exult like a man in the pleasure of love. But we would rest in Him, and, as He weans us from the world, strive after this one thing, that He would vouchsafe to us his favor: this is no derogation from, but a proof of his honor and glory. This is his chief glory—his unending and transcendent goodness, by which He has embraced us and conducted us to the end.

BUCER: Ver. 19. As a virtuous wife, who loves her husband sincerely, would a thousand times rather die than forsake him, or violate her fidelity to him, and yet does many things which she knows are displeasing to him, so it is with the hearts of the pious: they cannot apostatize from God, and they love Him above everything else, and yet the flesh is not entirely delivered from its weakness. There is no one, whom thou wouldest

not be obliged to censure for many faults, no one who does not constantly need the physician Christ, no one to whom we must not preach repentance. The more the truly pious apprehend that they are constantly in need of Christ, the more ardent will be their love to Him.

SCHMIEDER: The lame and the cast out are the wretched and scattered, who limping after the flock, remain behind, or are driven into flight and scattered by the inroad of the wolf.—Ver. 20. "Thus has God spoken."

AUGUSTINE: So great is the depth of the Holy Scriptures, that if one would apply himself to their study alone from childhood to declining age with the use of all his time and the greatest industry, he would be able to speak of daily progress. Not as though any one by diligence, however great, attained to know that which is necessary to salvation. But if one has grasped this by faith, and holds it fast, without which a pious and correct life is impossible, there always remains still for those who continue advancing farther such a great fullness of what is mysterious and veiled, such an exalted wisdom in the matter and words, that precisely the longer, the more zealously, and with the more ardent desire for learning, one continues in them, the better he understands what Sirach has said (xviii. 6): a man when he has even done his best, has scarcely begun; and if he thinks that he has completed his task, he is still far from it.





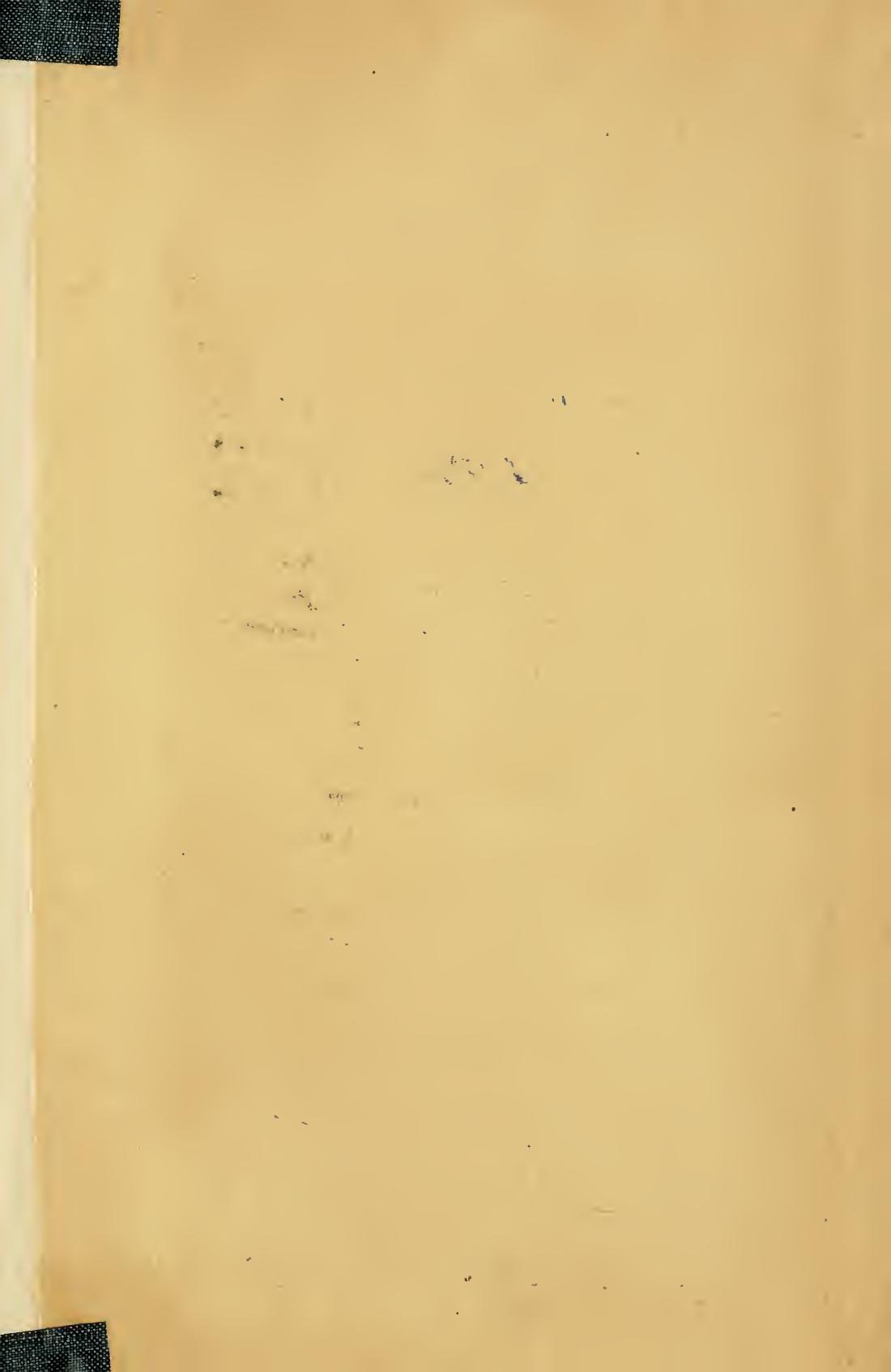






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